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no responsibility, however, for manuscripts submitted to him.]

Events of the Week.

THE triumphs and successes of Greece in the Balkan War have been sullied by the murder of the King in whose name the victorious armies had marched. On Tuesday afternoon, while King George was taking his usual stroll, almost unattended, near the villa which he had occupied at Salonica, he was shot and killed by a man named Alexander Skina. The murderer is a Greek, a native of Volo, and is said to be mad, and, according to another account, a Socialist. Some telegrams speak of an accomplice. There is no hint as yet of any political motive, such as explained the unsuccessful attempt on the King's life at the Piræus in February, 1898. He was then as unpopular as a result of the disastrous war with Turkey as he was popular yesterday. The crime can be explained only as a crazy act of private vengeance, for Skina seems to have demanded money from the King and to have met with a refusal. There is obviously no ground for the suspicions at first entertained that the murder might have some connection with Macedonian politics. It can have no direct political consequences, for the Crown Prince Constantine, justly popular as the commander of the victorious Greek armies, was immediately proclaimed King, and has received the allegiance of the army.

So closes an eventful, and in the end, a prosperous reign. It began in 1863 after the deposition of the half-mad Bavarian prince Otho, with the election of Prince George, who was then an unknown Danish prince of eighteen. The gift of the Ionian Isles to Greece by this country helped to make the new dynasty popular, and when the new King married a Russian princess, the Greeks readily came to understand the value of a family connection which linked their country with the British and Russian houses. The extremely democratic constitution of Greece gave the King few opportunities as a ruler, and while his character made him a moderating influence among an excitable people, it would not be true to suggest that he was able to play any great part in their evolution.

KING GEORGE was in some danger from an anti-dynastic movement after the war of 1897, but held his position mainly because of the diplomatic services which he was able to render. When the officers of the army revolted in 1910, he could only bend to the storm, but he saved his own position by consenting to the removal of his sons from their military commands. He showed great sagacity in consenting to call in M. Venezelos, in spite of that statesman's very radical and even anti-royalist opinions. They contrived to work harmoniously together, and some share in the credit of the Premier's almost miraculous success fell to the King. His personality, without being remarkable, was in the highest degree useful. His interests were largely centred in his very successful commercial management of his private estates.

COLONEL WESTON has won the Kendal seat, not indeed for the Tory Party of to-day, but for what is very likely to be the Tory Party of to-morrow. His majority of 581 is the largest Toryism has known since 1903, the year of Protection, and the fact that Colonel Weston collected it after throwing over what Mr. Mantalini would call the "demnition encumbrance" of Tariff Reform is almost fatal to Protectionists. Nor can Colonel Weston's success be due to national service, for he repudiated the National Service League, ignored Lord Roberts's telegram of support, and limited his scheme of national soldiering to a few winter drills and half-a-dozen summer visits to rifle ranges.

No doubt Colonel Weston is one of the men who win seats, not because of their opinions, but because they are themselves. But it remains true that he resisted every effort to fall into line with the official policy. Speaking at Manchester, on Tuesday, Mr. Bonar Law declared that Colonel Weston had been asked not to change his views but to subordinate them to official desires, and that he declined to do anything of the kind. A second Free Trade candidate—this time a Liberal—has been returned at Houghton-le-Spring. Here the veteran Mr. Cameron has been succeeded by Mr. Wing in a mining constituency. He triumphed by 2,133 votes over the Conservative and by 2,765 over the Labor member. The combined Free Trade and democratic majority was 6,288—larger than Mr. Cameron's in 1910.

COLONEL WESTON'S candidature was all along pursued by a storm of protests from the Protectionists, led by the "Pall Mall"—in which Mr. Garvin calls on heaven and earth to "pity the sorrows of the Unionist Party"—and the "Morning Post." Its chief supporter was the able "Yorkshire Post," which is of more account in the North than all the London Tory press. At the conference of the Tariff Reform League on Friday, Mr. Goulding declared that he would never vote for a "back number," and that the Colonel's candidature was a "great public national disaster." Mr. Chaplin insisted that Tariff Reform was in process of being "wiped out of existence," and that party unity no longer existed, and quoted approvingly Gladstone's saying that if Protection were given to manufactures it could not be denied to our greatest industry. Mr. Wyndham hinted that if he had to choose between Tariff Reform and Unionism, he would choose the former, and Mr. Storey and Mr. Hewins, giving up the official Tories in despair, spoke of Tariff Reform as innocent of party ties, and hinted at a recourse to Liberalism. Mr. Austen Chamberlain was more reticent, but at the banquet said that Tariff Reformers were "at the limits of compromise." But as the Conference was only attended by nineteen Members of Parliament, the leaders will probably go on ignoring it in policy and pacifying it in words. The "Times," indeed, coolly counters the attacks on Colonel Weston by denouncing "heresy-hunting." Protection is clearly no longer a creed which Tory candidates need swear by or perish everlastingly.

* * *

M. CLEMENCEAU has once more destroyed a Ministry, and created the first embarrassment for M. Poincaré, whose election he tried so hard to prevent. On Tuesday evening, M. Briand, as the official defender of proportional representation, had to face a Senate which is resolved to prevent it, and was defeated, on a vote on which he had staked the Government's existence, by a majority of 33. He appears to have made a brilliant defence, designed mainly to show that proportional representation is not a reactionary device. M. Clemenceau led the Opposition, and based himself partly on resentment against M. Briand's strictures on the local jobbery which the present system encourages, partly on vague, and to us meaningless, suggestions that proportional representation would lead to Caesarism, and partly on a calculation that it would cost the Republican parties 300 seats. Grotesque as that forecast sounds, it touches the real reason for the Senate's hostility, the fear of party losses to the Radical groups.

* * *

THE fall of the Briand Ministry may prove to be the beginning of serious embarrassments in French politics. M. Clemenceau is a figure too isolated to form a prosperous Ministry. But any friend of his would probably at once find himself in difficult relations with the President. An advanced majority could not be formed because the Socialists and some Radicals are opposed to Three Years' Service. On the other hand, a moderate majority would wish to proceed with proportional representation, and would accordingly inherit M. Briand's quarrel with the Senate. The result will probably be a troubled period of short-lived Governments, which will be tempted to ignore difficult internal questions, including even electoral reform, in order to concentrate on a militarist programme. A struggle with the Senate would be the natural outcome, if the Chamber really were in earnest over the two reforms which it is engaged in frustrating—the income tax law and pro-

portional representation. But its sentiments on both questions are lukewarm.

* * *

THE terms of the Note which the Powers will address to the Balkan League are now generally known. They will propose a Turco-Bulgarian frontier running from Enos on the Ægean Coast to Midia on the Black Sea. This will cut the Bulgarians off from access to the Sea of Marmora at Rodosto, which they wished to secure, as they put it, for the sake of their Asiatic trade. There are those who suspect that their chief export might have been army corps. Their claim for an indemnity will be refused, but by way of compensation they will be admitted to the Ambassadors' Conference which will sit at Paris to clear up the international finance of the war. The fate of the Ægean Islands and the frontiers of Albania will be reserved for the decision of the Powers.

* * *

THE full text of Mr. Churchill's correspondence with the Canadian Premier has now been published. It relieves Mr. Churchill of the charge of having originated the criticism of Liberal naval policy in Canada, for it shows that Mr. Borden asked for "information" as to the cost and building of modern warships, and begged him to submit a Canadian estimate to his experts. But it exhibits the First Lord enlarging on the opening given him. He gave the estimates called for, but coupled with them an elaborate statement of Canada's inability either to obtain the workmen or to lay down the plant, and gave some obviously deterrent examples of the cost and difficulty of such an experiment.

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IN a second letter, he argued that the Admiralty could not effectively co-operate in the manning of the Canadian units (though it will have to do this under the Borden plan), and concluded that "the idea of building the capital ships in Canada is impracticable." This is no doubt the sentence which has wounded Canadian pride, and we can hardly avoid the conclusion that all through the document the Admiralty rode hard for the plan which they pressed on Mr. Borden, and hard against the Liberal alternative, which they had practically accepted. The friction has its lessons; but there will be much more of it under the system of lent ships, with the ownership, the use, and the manning divided between the Imperial and the Colonial Governments, and with a watching Colonial representative on the Committee of Defence. We cannot imagine how the Government can have been rushed into such heedlessness.

* * *

REPLYING, on Monday, to a deputation from the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress, the Prime Minister repeated his negative conclusions on the nationalisation of mines and railways. As to mines, Mr. Asquith remarked, first, that the Prussian evidence was hostile, and, secondly, that the enterprise was too speculative and too varied in conditions to justify State management. On railways, he spoke with more reserve, but insisted that nationalisation would be followed by two demands which would soon eat into the rise in receipts—the traders' for easier rates and the workers' for better wages and conditions. Therefore, he thought the burden of proof still rested on the friends of nationalisation. But surely this is to ignore the main ground of the reform. The community has long ceased trying to make its high-roads and bridges "pay." It runs them as national services. Why should the iron roads be put merely in the profit-making category? Germany does not so treat her railway system, which is,

indeed, regarded (among other purposes) as the special handmaid of her agriculture.

* * *

THE Army Estimates, like their voracious sisters of the Navy, are up again. The total is £28,220,000, an increase of £360,000. This is chiefly covered by the rising cost of aviation (£283,000). The number of officers and men of the Military Wing is now to be raised to 1,000. Recruiting for the Territorials is increasing, in spite of Lord Roberts's campaign, over 61,000 men having joined in 1912. A concession is to be made to men while at the annual camps in the shape of the payment of their health insurance premiums for one or two weeks.

* * *

THE Persia Committee has addressed a letter to the Press expressing the gravest suspicions of the policy which the two protecting Powers are following in Persia. It suggests that Russia is actively pursuing her old plan of restoring the ex-Shah, and that Sir Edward Grey has at length weakened in his very decided objection to his return. This, judging by his statement in the House of Commons on Tuesday that he "strongly deprecated" the ex-Shah's return, would seem not to be the case. But some untoward facts have lent countenance to this notion. The first of them was the return to Teheran under Russo-British protection of an exiled reactionary leader, Saad-ed-Dowleh, who had been Secretary to the ex-Shah and his agent in some of his more recent manoeuvres. The second was the nomination, at the instance of Russia, of Prince Salar-ed-Dowleh to the governorship of Ghilan.

* * *

THIS prince, the younger brother of the ex-Shah, had been the leader in several raids or campaigns undertaken to further the movement of restoration. Ghilan is largely garrisoned by Russian troops, and it would be the route which the ex-Shah would naturally follow if he were once more to march on Teheran. This constructive evidence hardly suffices to convict our Foreign Office of acquiescence in a plan to restore Mohamet Ali. But it does suggest a want of vigilance, which is certain to be misunderstood in Persia, and might well encourage a reactionary plot.

* * *

MR. BRYAN has begun his term of office as Secretary of State with a harmless and characteristic indiscretion. Speaking at Irish banquets, he has twice declared for Home Rule, and coupled the toast, so to speak, with a paean over the discomfiture of the House of Lords and the decay of the hereditary principle. He said only what every man of liberal mind in every civilised country thinks, and no one could have taken exception to the speech if Home Rule were quite an accomplished fact. But it was not a discreet utterance for a Foreign Secretary to make. The prospects of the adoption of arbitration in the Panama dispute are much improved by the publication of a very weighty memorial, signed largely by American ex-ambassadors. The difficulty in dealing with the Democratic majority is not so much that it desires to protect coast-wise trade, as that it sees in the encouragement of sea traffic by the Canal a means of coping with the tyranny of the transcontinental railways.

* * *

ON Friday week Lord Roberts renewed at Wolverhampton his attempts to cajole the country (including the Liberal Party) into conscription. This time he hardly concealed his design to insist on barrack life, instead of on periods of training in camps or at rifle ranges, declaring that it made for moral virtues and

for strength of body and character. He also laid it down that the object of this conscripted force—which was to exhibit perfect equality between rich and poor—was to maintain the balance of power—"the time-honored and traditional European policy of this nation"—and to resist the dominance of a single nation aiming at the world-tyranny of Louis Quatorze or Napoleon. This is a plain hint that conscription is needed to supply France with an ally in arms against Germany—on land as well as on sea.

* * *

ON Tuesday, Mr. McKenna, challenged as to the prison treatment of suffragettes, made an interesting reply, which did not carry conviction, if we are to judge from the speeches, to all his hearers' minds. These were obviously divided, some, like Mr. Harold Smith and Sir Charles Cripps, deploring his weakness, and others, like Lord Robert Cecil and Liberals and Labor men generally, deprecating forcible feeding. Lord Robert's remedy for the recalcitrants was deportation. Sir Arthur Markham would let prisoners who refused food die if they insisted, while others, like Mr. Whyte and Mr. Keir Hardie, deprecated new coercive laws, and urged the remedy of the vote.

* * *

MR. McKENNA spoke with respect of the heroism of the suffragettes, who faced and even courted death so as to provide martyrs for their cause, but defended forcible feeding—which we think indefensible—and repudiated anything like a breakdown of prison discipline. Thus, of the sixty-six suffragettes sent to gaol during the present year only eight had been released on grounds of health, and only twelve had been forcibly fed, the rest having submitted. He said he was determined that none of these women should die in gaol. He therefore resisted self-starvation. But he proposed to strengthen his hands by a change in the law giving him the power of licensing out which obtains in regard to prisoners on penal servitude.

* * *

THE "British Medical Journal" has at last almost fallen into line with the doctors who persuaded the medical profession to accept service under the Insurance Act. Failing an agreement on the terms announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in December, the alternative would have been the introduction of a whole-time State Medical Service. Apparently, nothing short of Mr. Sidney Webb's critical, and on the whole valuable, article in the "Crusade" could make the situation clear to the "British Medical Journal." There has always been a strong case for the State Medical Service, but the panel system has at least the advantage of preserving the spirit of competition. The "die hard" section, completely beaten in their efforts to destroy the Act, have during the last few weeks done their best to create distrust of it. Their efforts to obtain "contracting out" on a large scale would, if successful, have caused the confusion they desired. As it is, the situation becomes clearer day by day. In spite of the fact that February and March are the busiest months of the year for doctors, careful inquiry has proved that only between one and two per cent. per day of the insured persons require medical attention. This percentage will be considerably lowered when all the insured have made their choice of doctor, for those who have not already chosen are presumably in good health. In London alone nearly £500,000 per annum will be distributed to the doctors who work the Act. This does not look like ruin.

Politics and Affairs.

BACK TO FREE TRADE AFTER ALL ?

THE Tory Party will, we hope, do themselves the justice of examining the cause of the misfortunes which they are now exhibiting to the world with all the self-humiliating ordinances of a disconsolate Hebrew prophet. Their late candidate at Westmoreland may be correctly described by his fellow-Conservatives as a "freak," an "eccentric" or a "back number," a "great public national disaster" or merely a "go-as-you-please" politician. But his interesting personality apart, he is an inevitable result of the situation which their leader, with the assent of the Tariff Reform League, has brought about. What has happened to Protection in this country is what happens to it everywhere. To use a phrase of Mr. Maxse, Tariff Reform policy has been "bisected into two parts—the agricultural and the industrial." Mr. Maxse seemed to attribute this operation to the malice or the incompetence of his leaders. It has a much less serious origin. It springs from the fact that Protection, so far from being a national policy, is, by virtue of its inalienable character and its inevitable treatment by politicians, a sectional one, and that, in particular, it creates an instant schism between the town and the country interest. Protection does not protect everybody. It protects some traders at the expense of others; and as the margin of a Protectionist tariff extends, the area of beneficial preference it covers shrinks. In our view, the Tory Party, confronted with this old dilemma, made a bad choice for itself. Agriculture had the first call on its sympathies. The British farmer is almost its historic appanage, and indeed the correspondent of the "Times" properly describes Colonel Weston as "of the stamp of the old traditional Toryism." Since the last great enclosures established large holdings on the ruin of the peasantry, the farmer has been a privileged, and, therefore, a conservative class. But none of the master minds of Tariff Reform had a thought for him. Mr. Chamberlain's eyes were on the Empire: Mr. Bonar Law was an urban, not an agricultural, Protectionist. When, therefore, the choice was made, and the British farmer was invited to help the manufacturer to the high prices he was to pay, both as a consumer and as a user of industrial implements, while his own product took its chance in the open port, not one but a dozen Weston candidatures became inevitable. This crowning blunder was made at the moment when the growth of the Labor Party had virtually killed Tory democracy in the towns, and left only a bribable "residuum" to be played with after the fashion of East Nottingham. In a word, all that was solid, historic, in the Tory Party was flouted, and the broad ascertained basis of Protection—the only foundation possible for the British variety—was deserted in the search for a "scientific" tariff on manufactured goods. In our view, the ablest Tory journalist is right in believing this situation to be fatal to Tory hopes at the next election, and possibly to the Tory Party itself. The farmer may not go Radical. But it is no longer his interest to take a single turn at the screw which in the

more dependent counties secures him a portion of the labor and cottage vote. An unqualified Free Trader sits for Westmoreland to-day as a Tory member, the first of his kind since the great schism was opened. How many industrial Protectionists—and the other brand of Protection is now an illicit one—will be returned for rural England in 1915?

For our part, we see nothing for it now but a complete Tory reversion to Free Trade. Bad times may check the anti-Protectionist movement, for Tariff Reform, like all political adventures, was founded on a speculation in its country's ills. But the cause is now completely discredited, either as economic theory or as a stable political platform. Either the Tariff Reformers must reconquer the ground that the "Times" and the "Mail" stole from them, or they had better shut up shop without further ado. For both the sentimental and the practical attraction of Protection have disappeared. Preferences are gone. The Colonies, scandalised by Mr. Law's preposterous appeal to them to pull his chestnuts out of the fire, have formally withdrawn to neutral territory, where it is certain they will remain so long as the question is a party battle-field here. Lancashire and Yorkshire are impenetrably hostile to the abandoned type of taxes; and now the counties obviously threaten disaster for the scheme of Protection which has been deliberately adopted in their stead. Every clear-headed partisan, therefore, must see that it must be either both kinds or no kind. The agriculturists would accept the first solution; but Lancashire will not, and it is an axiom of Tory electioneering that no Tory majority can pass the Lancashire veto. The Tariff Reformers must, therefore, see that while they have been outfought by the Liberals and the Labor Party, they have been outmanœuvred by the Free Fooders, who all along realised that by cutting off the food-tax annexe of the Protectionist structure, they would bring the whole building to the ground.

They have done it, and it is for the Tariff Reformers to fight or to yield. The first alternative is no longer feasible. Mr. Law has already surrendered, but it is to Free Trade Lancashire. What counter-force does Tariff Reform bring into the field? Less than a score of Members of Parliament attended the League's great rally in the Caxton Hall. That is just about the fighting array with which the malicious but exact calculation of the "Times" credited them. After the lesson of Kendal Mr. Law will be indisposed to make further concessions to this limited power, revealed as a magnificent bluff at the expense of the older Toryism. He will try and mitigate the gross offence and injury to agriculture of purely industrial Protection, and that very process will bring him nearer and nearer to a complete reversion to free imports. Thus, the prophecy of Free Traders that Protection would break down through its inherent unsuitability to the conditions of British industry is fast being realised. There is no such "rich man's" conspiracy to maintain Free Trade as Mr. Maxse scents. It is the universal conspiracy of common-sense. If Great Britain had been (a) able to feed itself, with a highly developed and varied agriculture based on peasant proprietary, and had not been (b) a great importer, both of food and of

raw material and of partly manufactured articles, whose trade concentrated itself more and more on finishing processes, Protection would have had a good fighting chance. As it is, Toryism must now quickly revert to Balfourian lines of anti-Radicalism, or must be torn violently asunder between its beaten enthusiasts and its triumphant wire-pullers, to undergo some fresh embodiment of thought and directing energy.

THE LIBERAL ATTITUDE TO LABOR.

MR. ASQUITH'S reception of the Parliamentary Committee of the Trade Union Congress last Monday, following the interesting debate initiated by Mr. Snowden in the House of Commons, gives a useful compendium of the present Liberal attitude towards Labor. In describing that attitude as one of cautious sympathy, we cast no sort of reflection upon the genuineness of Liberals' anxiety to redress grave and recognised defects in the condition of the working classes as regards wages, housing, and other pressing grievances. In recent years we find signs among politicians of all parties both of a new heart and of a more enlightened intelligence. The theoretical objections of the older Liberalism against the State as an instrument for supplementing self-help and undertaking useful lines of co-operative activity, have almost entirely disappeared. Liberalism may be said to have a really open mind towards the various proposals of nationalisation, taxation, State regulation of wages and hours, public housing schemes, and other large projects for strengthening the condition of the workers. But, as the speeches of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Buxton indicate, there remains a good deal of uncertainty as to what lines of present practical policy can be considered sound and feasible. The time has clearly come when a volume of close thought must be brought to bear upon the problem of the economy of moving along several converging lines of constructive policy, increased State ownership, public regulation, State support for special weaknesses and emergencies, a shifting of financial burdens from the weak on to the strong, all aiming at the two-fold goal of securing for all members of society a decent, reliable minimum of conditions and opportunities, while providing a sufficient motive to individual and collective enterprise.

The complex statement of the needs of Labor, set forth by its own spokesmen, clearly shows that no single simple solution is practicable. The growing stress, for instance, upon an extension of the Trade Board's policy towards a more general establishment of a minimum wage is a virtual admission that a wholesale measure of nationalisation is not serious politics. Mr. Snowden's amendment, indeed, coupling the demand for a minimum wage to be enforced upon private industry with the demand for the nationalisation of railways, mines, and other unnamed "monopolies," may be taken as the high-water mark of the demands of labor. Whether immediately feasible or not, these demands show a clear understanding of the actual current of events in the world of industry. For recent events have, on the one hand, disclosed a new

attack on the wage-progress of the working classes, and, on the other, have exhibited novel powers of control by railroads and other transport companies, mine-owners, and the builders of industrial trusts. Some of the defects and injustices, indeed, are by no means new, save in the intensity of their realisation. The iniquities of the housing system in town and country have at last aroused the conscience of all decent-minded men and women. But bad as is the housing of large sections of the workers, it is not worse than formerly. There has been some progress. And so it is with many other conditions of labor. Things move slowly, but nevertheless they move. It is, indeed, the perception of this truth that has killed the social conscience of many not unjust but easy-going persons. Things are definitely improving, they say, slowly perhaps, but impatience and interference with the natural pace of progress will do more harm than good.

But some features of the last decade compel revision of this easy meliorism. In the essential matter of wages, labor has been losing ground. During the last fifteen years the rapid rise of prices for most of the commodities which absorb working-class expenditure has outstripped the rise of money wages, so that large bodies of the workers find an actual lowering of their standard of living. Mr. Money is substantially correct in his assertion that since 1895 money wages have risen 13 per cent., as compared with a rise of retail prices amounting to 23 per cent. Though last year showed a not inconsiderable rise of wages in some trades, it may be taken as a true summary of the facts, that within the last fifteen, and especially the last five years, the real wages of the working-classes in this country (as in most other Western countries) have shown a slight positive decline. Now, since the actual product of wealth has indisputably advanced at a rapid rate, there exists a strong *prima facie* case for the view that the power of the workers by ordinary methods of individual or collective bargaining to hold and improve their conditions has been weakening. Of the expanding value of wealth, capital is getting a relatively larger share, labor a smaller. The fact that interest has risen greatly while wages have shown no equivalent rise is proof of this proposition.

It is this recognition, that labor is less able than formerly to cope with the organised strength of capital, that underlies the demand that the State should intervene in settling wages and that industries controlled by concentrated capital should be nationalised. That the railway and the coal-mining industries should stand out most prominently in the discussion was, of course, inevitable, in view of the fierce conflicts between Capital and Labor, and of the public interest in the peaceful, regular, and economical operation of these fundamental industries. The guarded language used both by Mr. Asquith and Mr. Buxton towards the demand for nationalisation of railways reads like the first stage in adoption. Indeed, the admission that competition has definitely been displaced by combination, and that Government control will need to be continually strengthened, can leave no doubt of the ultimate issue in those who are acquainted with the wider tendencies of State policy throughout the civilised world.

Coal-mining is beset by graver difficulties. But the economics of a common policy in administering the coal resources of the nation, and the terrible inconvenience of stoppages of coal supply, are not unlikely to force public intervention and regulation to a point at which nationalisation may seem preferable to all parties. National ownership of railways would, indeed, be gravely hampered in its operation unless the supply of fuel were also secured. That both measures are ripening at different paces in the direction of nationalisation is tolerably certain, though it will probably take one or two more "shocks" to bring to birth the fruits of this prolonged gestation.

Meanwhile, the concentration of Labor will chiefly be upon demands that the State shall supplement trade-unionism in establishing a minimum wage. One of the most interesting features of the debate was the absence of all strong or widespread opposition to the idea of such a State policy or to the extension of the Trade Boards Act. The list of new sweating trades, to which Mr. Buxton announced his intention to extend the Act, must be taken as simply the next instalment of a policy by which the State is definitely and consciously committing itself to the establishment of a subsistence wage. The marked success of the policy in its first experiment is calculated to inspire fuller confidence in each extension. It is becoming apparent that every trade ought to be and can become capable of adjustment to meet the demands of a living wage, if that obligation is firmly imposed upon it. The new State attitude towards Labor will involve experimental advances and not any catastrophic policy. But there is every reason to believe that a Liberalism which has shed its old hampering tenets, and is willing to adopt a constructive view of liberty and opportunity, will enter on new spheres of activity.

MINISTERS AND MARCONI SHARES.

SOME statements were made by Sir Edward Carson in his speech for the plaintiffs in the action for libel brought against the journal "*Le Matin*," by the Postmaster-General and the Attorney-General, which will greatly surprise the public. The specific statements of the "*Matin*" were withdrawn and apologised for. These were that Sir Rufus Isaacs and Mr. Samuel had bought shares in the Marconi Company at 50 francs and sold them at a profit, rising to 200 francs. Neither Minister had any dealings with the Marconi Company, and no Minister derived profit from dealings in any of the subsidiary companies. But it appears that on April 8th Sir Rufus Isaacs bought 10,000 shares in the American Marconi Company, when the home company had reached or nearly reached its top price, and the separate American company was raising capital for a purely American enterprise. One thousand of these shares were sold to Mr. Lloyd George, and another thousand to the then Master of Elibank. The shares have since depreciated, and such of them as are now held by these Ministers are held at a loss, or a fall from the price which they commanded last spring.

In commenting on these disclosures, we feel bound to say that, in common with the rest of the public, we

were under the impression that the charges or suggestions of Ministerial dealings in any shares associated with the various Marconi Companies had been disposed of by Sir Rufus Isaacs's statement in the House of Commons on October 11th. It appears that we were wrong and Mr. Maxse was right in concluding that the Attorney-General's denial had reference simply to dealings in the shares of the parent Company (with which the Government's contract was made) under circumstances implying corruption. Such a charge would undoubtedly lie against a Minister who made use of his official knowledge of the pending contract in order to buy shares at a low price with a view of selling them at a high one as soon as the inevitable boom set in. This, of course, was the one charge or suggestion which involved moral turpitude or the betrayal of a public trust. Sir Rufus Isaacs confined himself to repelling this capital accusation. But we are bound to offer the comment that the public gave his denial a wider range, and understood it to falsify the mass of gossip which attributed *any* participation by *any* Ministers in *any* Marconi undertaking. The purchase of shares in the American company, having been made a month after the signature of the contract, when the top price had been nearly realised and the "boom" exhausted, was not a matter into which an element of corruption—i.e., of the improper use of information authoritatively and secretly acquired—could have entered. We cannot, therefore, understand why full disclosure was not made in October, or at the moment when the cheeks of Rumor were first inflated with the tale of Ministerial purchases. And on the transaction itself we are bound to record our view that a grievous error of judgment was committed when Sir Rufus Isaacs touched a share in a Marconi venture—in itself a legitimate and useful enterprise—and commended the transaction to his colleagues. Corruption is hardly alleged in this matter; and we need not, therefore, discuss this gravest of all imputations on the conduct of a public man. But our political leaders have to consider not only what is right, but what is in the highest sense expedient. They have to reckon with malice and uncharitableness, and that in itself should be a warning to choose their path with scrupulous care. But, above all, they have to bethink themselves that democracy is constantly on its trial, and that in its interests they are bound to show a special and rigorous delicacy in every transaction in which Government and private enterprise approach each other as buyer and seller.

THE PITIFUL STATE OF PERSIA.

IN spite of the pointed invitations which came both from Lord Lansdowne and from Mr. Bonar Law, the debate on the Address has been concluded without even the meagre discussion on foreign affairs which is usual on this occasion. It was for some light on the affairs of Persia which the leaders of the Opposition particularly asked, and since their appeal was made, facts have become public knowledge which make the case for explanation peculiarly urgent. The letter which the Persia Committee has published this week discloses two reasons

for concern, of which one is an accomplished fact, and the other a surmise. The fact in itself is sufficiently serious. It appears that the adventurous younger brother of the ex-Shah, Salar-ed-Dowleh, who has often been engaged as a marauder or pretender in expeditions and raids, which the Government, at great expense, defeated, is once more in Persia. He is, however, no longer a rebel. He has been appointed to the governorship of the wealthy province of Ghilan, on the borders of the Caspian Lake. This was not, it seems, a spontaneous act on the part of the Persian Government. It was dictated, or shall we say counselled, by Russia, and it has roused, on the part of the people of the province, an opposition so vehement that the Prince, if he settles in Ghilan at all, can come only in his usual guise as an invader.

If that were all, this nomination would be a gross interference with Persia's effective liberties. With overwhelming force at her back, and a record of its unscrupulous use, Russia has employed her power to instal a governor who is regarded as the fighting head of the reactionary and royalist party, himself a militant rebel, who will, by all precedents, proceed, if he has the power, to the usual reprisals against the national party. But Persians and the Persia Committee see in this nomination a first step to a still more intolerable interference. The one programme of this Prince has been to restore his exiled brother to the throne of Persia, and he will command in Ghilan the route which the ex-Shah would naturally follow if he were, for the second time, to invade the kingdom which he lost. This symptom does not stand alone. At the instance of the two protecting Powers, the ex-Shah's trusted agent, a person who rejoices in the title of Saad-ed-Dowleh, had already been allowed to settle in Teheran. In both of these preliminaries our own diplomacy acquiesced. We cannot wonder if it is already rumored in Teheran that it has withdrawn its opposition to the culmination to which these two opening moves would naturally lead—the return of the ex-Shah himself. There is one point on which Sir Edward Grey has been firm through all this sorry Persian business, and that is his determination that Mohammed Ali should never again occupy the throne from which his people drove him. The Foreign Secretary's explicit answer to Mr. Harvey on Tuesday certainly suggests that he has not weakened in that resolve. But if he adheres to it, it argues a singular indiscretion or inadvertence to permit a first step which is nicely calculated to add the confusion of a new counter-revolution to all the existing troubles and difficulties of Persia.

It is now six months since the semi-official statements which defined the results of the Balmoral meeting gave some promise of a happier future for Persia. Sir Edward Grey and M. Sazonoff, we were assured, had devised a common programme. The advice, given to them by the "Times" and the "Novoe Vremya," to make an end of half-measures and partition the country once for all, had been decisively rejected. The new policy was to be one of cordial support for the Persian Government, with financial assistance as its first item, and the

withdrawal of the foreign troops as an early prospect. Little enough has happened since October to remind us that this programme was ever devised. The central Government is as unstable as ever, and the Regent, always suspicious of a Russian movement to restore the Shah, has not yet ventured to return to Persia. Some financial assistance seems, indeed, on the point of being granted, but of any withdrawal of the Russian garrisons there is no sign whatever. When we turn from the promises of October to the facts which the Persia Committee recalls, it would seem as though the note of the policy of the two protecting Powers had been not merely stagnation but reaction. Yet it is difficult to believe that there can have been any real difficulty during this period in negotiating with Russia. The obstacle in the past to the loyal fulfilment of joint programmes and a common policy, has always been that Russia seemed to hover between the two European groups, ready, if she were not humored by her partners of the Triple Entente, to re-insure herself with Germany. No temptation of that kind can have presented itself during these months of Balkan crisis. She was frankly at variance with the Triple Alliance, and must have wished to avoid any action in Persia which could have been disobliging to us. If a moment so propitious has not been used to make a real advance in a constructive policy for the restoration of Persian independence, the reason must be that our Foreign Office does not regard the Persian question as one of its capital concerns, or else that it has lacked the adroitness to turn the occasion to account.

There are two policies in Persia which would be intelligible. There is only one which would be consistent with honor. We can understand, though we profoundly dissent from it, the view of those who would despair of Persian Independence, renounce the North to Russia, and seek compensation by creating a Southern sphere under British control. That would involve a frankly immoral repudiation of all our undertakings, and it would add inordinately to our military obligations. But those who urge it are precisely the school which desires to lure us into conscription. If that is their end, a policy in Persia which must destroy the present system of Indian defence, would eventually supply them with a cogent argument. The other policy of assisting Persia to become a really independent and well-governed buffer State is the only one which is consistent alike with our interests and our pledges. The middle course of inaction and inconsistency which has been followed since the expulsion of Mr. Shuster can be defended by no argument whatever. We have yielded to Russian aggressions, but never quite so far as to close the controversy and end the uncertainty. We have not permitted the Persians to build up a strong State with the assistance of neutral and disinterested foreigners. But neither have we imposed our own nominees. We have allowed the Mejliss to be destroyed, but we have not so far sanctioned the only natural alternative of a return to despotism. The consequence has been the steady increase of anarchy, the rapid progress to utter bankruptcy, and the decay—almost past revival—of the hopes and impulses which made the Persian revolution a promising national renaissance.

We cannot think even now that the case of Persia is hopeless. No nation in history has ever struggled into liberty and stability without vicissitudes and reverses, mistakes and failures, much worse than any which Persia has yet endured in the few brief years of her new era. Most European States have at some time a record of anarchy behind them which may be measured, not in years, but in decades. It is not too late to attempt a sincere application of the Balmoral programme. The alternative is to confess that our whole unpopular *rapprochement* with Russia has been from first to last a failure, and that the Persian Agreement has involved us in dishonor to the Persians, while it has exposed us in our turn to the sharp practice of a partner whom we lacked the skill to manage or the spirit to resist.

A London Diary.

THE murdered King of the Hellenes was surely one of the least ostentatious monarchs who ever wore a crown. He kept nothing that could be called state, either in Athens, or in his endless, soul-wearying pilgrimages to Courts and Ministerial bureaux in the interests of the wonderful but not always grateful people who had the good fortune to be ruled by him. He literally "travelled in" Greece and her affairs; and if there was one thing more than another that kept her alive after the war it was the King's influence with the Russian, the British, and the German Courts, and the tact with which he used it. I had the honor of waiting on him during his last visit to England. Eschewing all the accustomed Royal forms and ceremonies, he talked like the simple, clear-sighted gentleman he was. He touched all sorts of subjects; the fight over the Budget of 1909 was especially interesting to him, and he spoke of it with much knowledge of our politics and shrewdness in his judgment of them. He seemed incapable of being bored; and his long reign, with its sad but glorious close, was one long tribute to the indomitable patience which ruled his conduct and life.

I AM told that the alarm of the Tariff Reformers as to the state of Tory opinion in the North falls even short of the discomforting truth. Toryism is not merely going for free food, but for a considered reversion to Free Trade. This was the sentiment of a meeting of leaders lately held at Bradford, and Lancashire opinion is said to be still more advanced and emphatic. The always superficial hold which Protectionist theories had over the Tory manufacturers is fast disappearing, and the reversion to theories of trade which most of these men have held for a lifetime is, in the opinion of good observers, singularly rapid.

FOR the present the Opposition seem to be content to mark time. Ulster remains passive in the House, and is, perhaps, a little sulky—witness the continued and rather singular absence of its better-known spokesmen. On the front bench Mr. Bonar Law cultivates Mr. Austen Chamberlain, smiles on the penitent advances of Mr. Wyndham, and almost petrifies Mr. Asquith by the

unaccustomed urbanity of his remarks across the table. Apparently the idea of rushing the Government position in a whirlwind of invective and new-stylisms has been abandoned, and in its place we are to have a return to the old-fashioned, sedative, steady-going school of strategy. How long will the change last?

If the great writer who called himself "Mark Rutherford" had died in any country but our own, the foremost of his contemporaries would have written of his work in all the leading newspapers and critical journals, and would have been proud to stand by his graveside, and join in the last farewells. As it is, I suppose we must congratulate ourselves on the fact that the "Times" of Monday puts him third on the list of its obituary notices, yielding the first place (and its largest type) to an obscure Bishop, the son of a still obscurer Earl. And yet I will venture the prophecy that when the tale of the great Victorian writers is made up in the years to come, "Mark Rutherford's" name, like Ben Adhem's, will lead all the rest. For in the sifting of our stores of art-material, the final choice must surely rest on that which is not only great but perfect, and which sheds the clearest light on the life of the past. Dickens will, of course, be invaluable for his general view of mid-Victorian England, and Trollope for his studies of one corner of it. But Dickens painted with rather too broad a brush, and Trollope with rather too soul-less a one, while Meredith and Hardy were both a little over-weighted with manner and genius.

"MARK RUTHERFORD" will have none of these drawbacks for the imaginative student of those times. In the first place, he lays bare "shy neighborhoods," like out-of-the-way London or the out-of-the-way Eastern Midlands; studying the life neither of the few great nor of the crowded mass, but of the obscure, lower-middle people who built our country chapels and carried on the Puritan tradition through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In the second place, he makes their lives shine with the light of his sympathetic genius, which illumines them as nothing in England has been illumined since Jane Austen. Does the "enlightened foreigner" seek an English "Madame Bovary"? Let him read "Catherine Furze." Or an English "Confessions"? Then let him turn to "The Autobiography of Mark Rutherford," and "Mark Rutherford's Deliverance." Does he want truth and poetry in a garb of prose almost Quakerish for want of adornment? Let him open the "Journals" at almost any page. I never return to these books (and they are never long out of my hands) without feeling that I approach an immortal treasure-house of the soul.

THEIR author was, I am happy to say, a fairly constant writer for "THE NATION" (of late years he wrote for little else). Mr. White stood apart from men in a seclusion much more absolute than the oft-invaded privacy of the invalid Meredith. Literary London hardly knew or noted him, and his last letter to me, dated last month, revealed the self-effacing, self-distrustful character of an artist who, long years after he had

attained to perfect mastery of his craft, could speak of the "dreadful blunders" of a study as near perfection as it well could be. This was no affectation; it was part of the loneliness of temper which made him the interpreter of solitude in life. Yet he deeply sympathised with wildness and revolt, spiritual and political, and knew them in his own life. His books are no anodyne; they are rather suppressed tempests, such as reach the ocean in its depths—nothing violent, but with an ominous roll and swell.

MR. WHITE'S literary power, laboriously and patiently acquired, descended from his father, who for many years was well known in the House of Commons as much the most original and powerful door-keeper of a race of noted and dreaded functionaries. All the great Parliamentarians of his day knew him well, though not his admirable Parliamentary sketches. Among them was "C.-B.," who told me that on one occasion William White greatly shocked him by violently arresting a Bishop on his way through the corridor which leads to the House of Lords. The Bishop meekly obeyed Mr. White's imperious arm, but "C.-B." ventured a timid remonstrance. "Why did you stop that Bishop?" he asked. "You know he has a right of entry to the Lords." "Not he," was the curt reply. "He's only one of those Colonials." Neither father nor son, indeed, was a great respecter of the cloth.

It seems almost impossible to believe that Mr. Forbes-Robertson is leaving the stage. In appearance, manner, and voice, he might still count among the younger generation of actors, and, indeed, he is still at the height of his powers. But the dinner given in his honor by the O. P. Club last Sunday was a reminder of hurrying time. For it was a farewell feast (as Mr. Shaw wrote, it ought rather to have been a fast), and the 440 guests had come, in a sense, to bury as well as to praise. It was a fine thing to see so many actors and actresses assembled with whom Mr. Forbes-Robertson had been associated in earlier days—men and women who had won their fame in the 'seventies, and in a few cases even earlier. The Kendals were there, Sir Squire Bancroft (bringing a charming letter from the delightful actress whom some still remember as Marie Wilton), Mr. Alfred Bishop, Miss Ellen Terry, Miss Kate Rorke, and a crowd of other well-known people, besides the crowd whose fame is making now. Nothing could have surpassed Mr. Forbes-Robertson's own speech for interest and eloquence. When he dropped his manuscript, and in that singularly beautiful voice of his (the voice I remember best as Buckingham's in "Henry VIII.") expressed his heartfelt gratitude to all his colleagues in the art of a great career, the effect was profoundly moving.

I CAME across a curious example of the extent to which the study of English letters prevails in native India, in the fact that 1,300 sets of the new edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" have been sold to natives.

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

THE ART OF "MARK RUTHERFORD."

It may be doubted whether any man is so abstract an artist as to use his pen in perfect solitude. Language is still speech, even when it is written, and the impulse to create is also a passion for confession and communication. A man may seem to himself, as he writes, to be filled only with his theme. He may in the concentrated fervor of conception be aware only of the impulse to render the ideal world he has imagined with a directness that answers to his own vivid realisation. But sometimes shyly, sometimes with a bold and inspiring consciousness, the thought of the reader is present to him. We are apt to classify novelists too mechanically as realists or romantics, artists or preachers. It would be no less illuminating to inquire for whose ears and eyes it was that they wrote their tales. There is no difficulty in deciding that question in the case of the bigger and robuster men. In John Wesley's phrase, they took the world for their parish. We are quite sure that when Tolstoy wrote his epic of "War and Peace," he was bequeathing it as a possession for ever to the Russian nation. He may have thought dimly of his vaster European audience, but the book was written for every Russian heart for whom the memory of Borodino can set the bells ringing and the chants intoning. Of Hugo, and Dumas, and Scott, one may say the same thing. They appealed to no section, to no idiosyncrasy of temperament; they were adding to their nation's treasury. They addressed the nation as directly, and perhaps as consciously, as a statesman who seeks in his speeches to form its opinions and mould its policy. Of lesser men one may suspect that they wrote for a school, a party, or a clique. Flaubert, when he narrated, saw himself telling his tale to a select and critical circle of his fellow-craftsmen before a fire stoked with condemned masterpieces. We are disposed to think that the originality of the great artist who died last week lay, first of all, in the modesty and intimacy of his writing. Some men have written for a nation, and others for the critics. Mark Rutherford seems always in a moment of leisure, when some happy accident in the clash and commerce of minds has broken down the habitual reticences and trivialities of life, to be confiding in a beloved friend. His are no tales told by the orator in the market-place, by the neighbor at the Christmas fireside, by the *raconteur* at his club. They are closet confidences, and never, if one would read them aright, does one lose the sense of a narrator who speaks because he trusts, and gives of his best because he counts on being understood.

The narrative couched in the form of an autobiography is among the oldest of literary devices. It was already classical before Defoe used it, and no master has handled it without extracting some of its possibilities as a revelation of the human soul. But one may question whether in all literature the illusion is so perfect, the intimacy so precious, as in the first of Mark Rutherford's books. Who, in reading it, has failed to give the imaginary writer his devoted sympathy, and forgotten, like the birds which pecked the fruit on Apelles's canvas, that its author was an artist? Mark Rutherford tells us early in these piquant pages that he was a man who conceived a high ideal of friendship, who would have given all to a friend and expected all from him in return. He never found that friend, and the book comes to us as his appeal and confession to the friend who never listened in the flesh. Who can read it without conceiving across the years that he had been that friend unborn? Who can receive it save as a confidence which it was hardly decent to print, and a sort of desecration to share with other readers? Nor is this supreme illusion a triumphant literary trick. It is the essence of Mark Rutherford's art. From this came the ease and grace of style, from this the simplicity of diction and the perfect spontaneity in the use of figure and ornament and epigram. There is no display. There is no conscious production of effect, and the reason is that by some need of friendship, some shy passion to escape from utter

loneliness, William Hale White, veiled in a clinging pseudonym, contrived to write as if on every page he were communicating with a rare and trusted friend. No man could think with more of crispness and decision. But one reads these sentences, which have all the force without the form of epigrams, with no sense of strangeness or surprise. When heresy is defined as an attempt to find a meaning in dogmas, when it is said of a deeply religious personage that his remarks about religion never had the self-evident truth of his simplest utterances about his bodily pleasures and pains, we do not seem to ourselves to be reading epigrams. No conscious wit has gathered these reflections into a Pilgrim's Scrip. A singularly honest mind is expressing itself intimately by the fireside. If it happens to speak very well, it is because it speaks with passion, the passion that demands and compels sympathy.

It is no accident which has given to Mark Rutherford's novels this form and atmosphere of a sensitive and exclusive intimacy. They are nearly all of them tragedies of loneliness and failure, revelations of a misery which pride or delicacy veiled from the world. The type of them is that marvellous little episode of Miss Arbour's confession in Mark Rutherford's autobiography. A sweet old lady, to all appearance the pattern of an old-world spinster, suddenly, in the hope of saving a friend by her own example from a misery like her own, breaks down the reserve of a life-time and tells the distant secret story of her own brief unhappy married life. There is nothing in any literature in its way so direct, so convincing, so simple, and so passionate as this sudden dramatic self-revelation. But it is not a rare achievement, bracketed among alien stuff in a formal novel. It is the model and flower of all Mark Rutherford's work. His novels are a gallery of portraits of men and women who have all lived through some sad formative experience like Miss Arbour's. It matters little whether the form of the narrative is autobiographical or descriptive. Always we seem to be listening to some shy friend who, in these pages, has broken a long reserve as much from his own need as for our benefit. Most of them, men and women alike, were unhappily married or missed the love which would have given their lives a meaning. You will not find in all these books a crude or vulgar occasion for this misery. The tragedy comes never from outward infidelity, rarely from a competing love, and nearly always from the mere inadequacy of wife or husband and the lack of sympathy and understanding. It is the art of these books that though hero or heroine is commonly a simple man or woman of the people, lifted above them, not by ambition or talent, but simply by a greater sensitiveness or imagination, though the occasion of his misery is rarely more than the callousness or coldness of one who should have loved him, the experience assumes as we read it the dimensions and burden of a world's tragedy. Outside of Russian fiction is there, we wonder, anything in modern fiction to equal the tale told in "The Revolution in Tanner's Lane," by the man who had nothing to tell of himself save that he was always "dull," and nothing to record of his life save the gradual ebbing and falling away of trade and prosperity, friendships and natural ties, simply because he was always "dull"? The tragedy is only the more impressive because it is always just. A Strindberg would have made of these tales of unhappily married men a monotonous assault on women. Mark Rutherford has a brotherly humanity in his writing about women, sensitive, sincere, and free from any struggling self-consciousness, which no other English novelist of the first rank attained, unless it were Gissing. If we sympathise with the spiritual isolation of Mr. Cardew in "Catherine Furze," we are no less moved by the picture of his struggling inarticulate wife, doomed to live with him at arm's length, because of her defective imagination.

These books, with their poignant studies of loneliness, depression, and failure might have been, if that were all, only a contribution of modern pessimism. They remind us in their gloomier moments of Gissing's work. No complication or excitement of plot redeems their sadness. Even when, as in "The Revolution in Tanner's

Lane," the outward scene is one of stirring events, it is still in the drab inner world of the hero's personal life that our attention is centred. There is an assassination, a cavalry charge, and a hanging, and still we are held in the close spiritual atmosphere of an old-world dissenter's inner experiences. But the lover of Mark Rutherford learns early in his friendship to look for the consolation and uplifting of some brave, difficult victory over the unhappy and lonely self. We are in a world of doubters and heretics and atheists. But through it all there speaks, sometimes in a modern idiom, sometimes in a phrase that seems to have its origin in Thomas à Kempis, a realisation, religious in its sentiment if not in its form, of some wider life of sympathy and resignation which dwarfs and soothes the miseries of the lonely soul. It was a magic akin to Wordsworth's which could describe in "Miriam's Schooling," with minute psychology and detailed narrative, the release of a lonely mind from her personal misery through the study of the stars. Mark Rutherford is indeed a supremely skilful psychological novelist, who can tell a moving tale without departing from the almost trifling and unponderable things of daily life. But he is also a prophet and a sage, whose wisdom is the more precious because it is neither the confession of the hermit nor the appeal of the preacher, but the intimate confidence of a fire-side friend.

It is hard to assess the exact place of Mark Rutherford in our literature, because he stood so absolutely alone. He had no master, he left no school. He came nearer in form and manner and temperament to an absolute originality than any novelist of his generation or ours. Power he had in supreme measure, if power it is to seize the imagination and haunt the memory. Subtlety and skill in analysis, grace and ease of style, and knowledge of his fellows no critic could deny him. It must be allowed that his subject-matter was limited. He wrote never of success, never of ambition, never of vehement love or hate, rarely even of a tranquil happiness. From all the broad lights and illuminated streets of life he turned away, timid and aloof. It was by a natural selection that he drew his characters mainly from the serious world of English dissent as it existed two and three generations ago. That was no hampering limitation. It was a wider world than the society, neither quite aristocratic nor quite bourgeois, with its banking its military and its Anglo-Indian circles, which Thackeray chiefly explored. It was above all the society, preoccupied as it was with a tradition of personal and subjective religion, interested in its own conscience, concerned for its own salvation, which gave him the natural medium for his own views on life. Mark Rutherford wrote of Dissent as inevitably as Goethe turned in "Wilhelm Meister" to the world of the theatre, or Tourgenieff to the ferment of Russian student life. He dealt with morals as they dealt with art and ideas. He is unique among novelists by this insight which seems to raise him at his best to the fellowship of the saints. He is unique as much by what he lacked as by what he possessed. But above all, he stands among the supreme tellers of tales unique by the affection he inspires and the attraction he exerts. He does not dazzle. He does not amuse. He does not launch us on a broad and splendid stream of life. But he achieves what other novelists have hardly essayed, an intimacy which becomes a personal relation. We fancy him dedicating his book to the friend, as yet unmet, who was destined to understand. It is the illusion and pride of the reader to be himself that friend.

TORY TRANSCENDENTALISM.

Few are likely to dispute the proposition that the Conservative Party in this country is in urgent need of something to strengthen and encourage it. Some suggest that what is wanted is a change of leader, and that any change would be better than none. Others call for a constructive social policy, a steady platform, or a rousing party cry. But the writer of an ingenuous little work, introduced by Lord Willoughby de Broke, and entitled "National Revival" (Herbert Jenkins), finds that the one thing needful is a philosophic basis.

Most commendable, indeed, is the aim set forth in the introduction, "a higher conception of citizenship, based upon mutual and combined efforts of all classes, that will place on a firmer foundation than ever the security and prestige of the British Empire and of every one of its members."

But where are we to find this higher conception of citizenship? We are not carried far towards an answer by the statement that "duty must be the starting-point of political thought, for from it all human rights are derived," for notions about duty are so divergent. And then there is the question of one's duty to oneself, one's family, one's class, so likely at times to conflict with, and to triumph over, any broader and more attenuated conception. But a revived Conservatism, devoted to securing "human rights," sounds more promising. Liberals have too long pretended to a monopoly of "human rights" and "social justice," and "access to opportunities" to which they have no proper claim! For modern Liberalism, with its loose talk of equality and government by majorities, is really as "bottomless" as Whiggism in Johnson's day. A process which ultimately comes to "counting heads" cannot furnish any reasonable or reliable foundation for rights. The "rights of man" must be grounded upon a true conception of the end to which human life is destined in the scheme of things, man's place in the moral order of the universe. Only this conception of "ends" can give a meaning to opportunities. "The right to opportunity, then, is a transcendental right, for it is derived, not from society, nor from the State, but from the transcendental ground of man's moral life": it belongs to his vocation and duty "to become the best that he can become." And so we drift into the sanction for conservation which always lay latent in the neo-Hegelian philosophy of Oxford in the 'seventies and 'eighties, the obvious source from which the whole phrasing of this Tory revivalism is derived. It is true that Green, its most conspicuous exponent, was an ardent Liberal in politics. But academic conservatism has ever since rested upon the obscurity which beset the doctrine of human rights as expounded in that philosophy. Repudiating the notion of natural and inalienable individual rights which was the foundation of eighteenth-century Radicalism, it tried to substitute the notion that all rights related to opportunities of self-realisation for persons living in society. But no concrete meaning was given to these rights, and no clear criterion for determining them, or for adjudicating the conflicts which admittedly arise. Even if it be contended that a practical criterion is provided in the concept of "the general will," this does not carry us very far, for there always remains the question how that general will is to be interpreted. No educated exponent of "the general will" has ever admitted that a vote of the majority is necessarily, or even normally, an exact index of that will, or necessarily tends to realise the common good. So it has always remained open for philosophical Conservatives to find for these "transcendental rights" an authority more congenial to their private taste and their judgment regarding the class of men who are competent to guide the destiny of the nation. Once grant that the rights of the citizen have their foundation in the moral order of the world, *in montibus sanctis*, then it easily follows that to read aright this moral order, and to interpret it in political institutions, belongs to a discreet minority. The crude notion that the authority for Government comes from the people involves, according to this theory, confusion of political authority with political power. So we are told that "the power of the State is a power of the social organism; in a democratic country it is derived from 'the people.' The authority of the State pertains primarily to the purpose or function of the State, and is derived immediately from the conception which it sets forth—the conception of social justice—and ultimately from that general Divine vocation, that objective moral order, which is the validating ground of that conception."

But who are the soothsayers, the reliable interpreters of the Divine vocation? If the voice of the people is not God's voice, whose voice is? For the

really ultimate authority will not, after all, be God's, but God's as mediated by these earthly human interpreters. So we come at last through all this rigmarole of subterfuges to the really basic principle of Conservatism. "In a Democratic country the authoritative institutions in the State must necessarily be forms of 'minority representation.'" But not any minority will do. "A minority which is merely a minority is nothing but a feebleness of power. And such a power, in its nakedness, has no claim to maintain itself against a predominant will. If it clothe itself in the garments of right, the case is altered. And this is what a minority must always do, if it is to be genuinely authoritative." The writer avows that "the governing classes" have often neglected this high vocation. "They have asserted an interest rather than demonstrated an equity," and the trumpet-call of this revivalist is an appeal "to transform their interests into equities," and to "dress themselves in the garments of right." They will then become the authoritative exponents of the general will, presumably with the right and duty of overriding mere majorities!

We seem to have heard this sort of thing before, though never with such pomposity of language. The "possessing classes" were to become true "lords of land," true "captains of industry," taking all their properties and opportunities as a trust to be administered under Heaven for the general good, and securing for their humbler brethren (who are also God's creatures) such liberties as, in their superior discretion, they adjudge to be beneficial for them.

If we ask what it all amounts to, what this Tory revival is to do for the workers of our country, we are once more fed with empty phrases. We turn to a chapter headed "The Fundamental Problem," and find a denunciation of "the soullessness of modern work." Routine labor must be "moralised," the "waste" of our present educational system must be "abated," the home must be "reconstituted," and all must be set on a religious basis. We hear of industrial reconstruction "through the idea of partnership or co-ordination," and of a Social Reform along wholly different lines from those of Mr. Lloyd George or Mr. Sidney Webb. But there is no single sentence making the connection between theory and anything that can be called practical reform. There is positively nothing which Lord Willoughby de Broke or any other of these national revivalists, eager to "knit together the wills and affections of men in the generous equities of Eternal Right," can lay before a Conservative Association. Desirous as we are to see principles pumped into the Conservative or any other party, we are not able to persuade ourselves that this thin decoction of the older Balliol political philosophy will do much to stir from their despondency the party doomed to follow Mr. Bonar Law, or will goad them on to achieve "the generous equities of Eternal Right."

THE LIGHT OF AFRICA.

"He is certainly the wonder of his age," wrote Mrs. Moffat, wife of the great South African missionary, to her daughter, Mrs. Livingstone. Nor was the phrase merely an uncommon tribute of family admiration. It was written on Livingstone's return home after the four years of his first great African journey from the Cape to Loanda, and from Loanda to the mouth of the Zambesi. But the rest of his life, the remaining seventeen years of perpetual endeavor, only confirmed the judgment, and, in a century peculiarly rich in strong personalities, we do not know to whom the sentence could be more justly applied. There was about Livingstone a certain magic, a demonic charm, the tradition of which still lingers in Central Africa, and from time to time suddenly rejoices the modern British traveller on his way. It was the magic that made him

"the wonder of his age."

In writing of such a man, it is difficult to choose what points to dwell upon. He was a great missionary in the usual sense of the word—a great teacher of a simple form of Christianity in which he profoundly

believed. The fame of his subsequent career makes people forget the ten years of difficult and persistent labor as a missionary far away in the region of the Northwest Transvaal, beyond the Magaliesberg, to which one now looks from Johannesburg and Pretoria. It was during those years that he became possessed with the two other great passions of his life—exploration and the defence of the people from slavery. During those years, after crossing the Kalahari Desert, he made his first great discovery. Lake 'Ngami was known by report before, but he was the first white man to reach it, and only a few years ago, while the present writer was standing by a kind of "fairy dell" in the vast forests of Africa's central watershed, a rough "transport-rider" said to him, "This is the real source of the river Okavango that runs into Lake 'Ngami—Livingstone's 'Ngami, you know."

It was during those years that pity and indignation drove him first to make a stand for the natives against the brutality of the white men; especially of the Boers, who by their system of forced labor were reducing the helpless people to slavery, and even used to compel them to fight their battles against other tribes, putting them in the front rank with their axes, while they themselves from a safe distance fired at leisure into the brown. And it was in one of those years that the lion shook him like a rat, producing a kind of stupor or dreaminess that left no sense of pain or terror, but only a vague wonder which part of him the lion would eat first. The famous description of that scene comes near the very beginning of his first and greatest book (unhappy was the boy or girl of last century who was not brought up on that book, side by side with the adventures of Moses, Samson, and David!). The very description shows the peculiarly careful and scientific observation of the man, intermingled with a simple faith. His extreme peril did not blind him for a moment, nor is there a single boastful or melodramatic word in his account. He merely observes that, in the case of all animals killed by carnivora, the shake which annihilates fear "is a merciful provision by our benevolent Creator for lessening the pain of death."

Discovery, scientific observation, and the defence of natives from slavery—those, apart from his mission as evangelist, were the motive forces of his life, and before he started, at the age of forty, upon his enterprise of reaching the West Coast at Loanda from the great bend of the Zambesi, he had already accomplished enough for one man's lifetime in all three lines. During this week of his centenary we have heard much of his missionary work; much of his extension of knowledge, not only by travel, but by that peculiarly careful and scientific observation; and much of his attempts to make the encroachment of Europeans upon Africa a blessing to her peoples instead of the hideous curse which, in spite of all his efforts, it has hitherto been. Whether as teacher, explorer, or champion of the oppressed, no praise can be too great for such a man. But those are services which no one in speaking of Livingstone could possibly overlook. Let us rather think for a moment of a more intimate quality which lay at the very basis of his character, gave the distinction to his manner of carrying out those three main objects of his life, still surrounds his memory with a kind of sanctity in the native mind, so that even his native cook, who still survived on the Upper Zambesi a few years ago, was encircled with a queer halo of honor—made him, in a word, "the wonder of his age."

The action which best illustrates the quality we mean is well known, but might easily be passed over. Having started from the Cape in June, 1852, in a year's time he reached Linyanti, about five days' march from the great bend of the Zambesi, and only some 150 miles from the Victoria Falls, at that time undiscovered. Thence, as we have said, he resolved to open a route, if possible, to Loanda, the chief coast town of Portuguese Angola. On the whole, this was his greatest journey, and the most perilous, except perhaps his last. The country was quite unknown. He had to feel his way from village to village, guiding himself like a ship at

sea, but with course constantly interrupted and diverted by savage and hostile tribes, by forests and the water-logged plateaus that feed the great rivers of south-central Africa, and, worse than all, by the atrocious slave-trading that still makes Portuguese Angola one of the darkest blots on the world's surface. He reached Loanda in another year (May, 1854). It was a triumph of exploration. He had done what no one had thought possible. He had penetrated unvisited regions, and brought news of unknown peoples, rivers, and forest tablelands, existing where only barren desert had been imagined before. He was only an unknown Scottish missionary on a salary of £100 a year, the son, as he boasted, of "poor and pious parents." He had only to go home by ship to receive the highest honors and probable wealth. Like all African travellers, he was sick and worn with fever, bad food, heat, and wet. He was quite alive to the joy of returning to "civilisation"—to a bed, sheets, real bread, his own language, intelligent converse, and all the other pleasures which people at home take as a matter of course, but which seem so precious when you emerge from the heart of Africa. The strongest feelings of man's heart called him home. Soon after he started from the Cape, he had written in his diary:—

"Am I on my way to die in Sebituane's country? Have I seen the end of my wife and children?—the breaking up of all my connections with earth, leaving this fair and beautiful world and knowing so little of it? I am only learning the alphabet of it yet, and entering on an untried state of existence. Following Him who has entered before me into the cloud, the veil, the Hades, is a serious prospect. My soul, whither wilt thou emigrate? Where wilt thou lodge the first night after leaving this body?"

So he stood at last on the cliff of Loanda, and before stretched the sea, which, to us islanders, is always the way home. Love, fame, the height of rewards, health, wealth, comfort, and human intercourse, all summoned him to the easy-going ships that lay waiting in the port. Behind him lay the dangers through which in two years he had struggled, escaping with bare life—the hideous forms of sickness, the fevers, the sores, starvation, and thirst, perils by land and water, perils from savage beasts, and men more savage. Close in front lay his home. But he had brought with him a few Barotze carriers from the neighborhood of Linyanti, and they were afraid to return alone. Without the white man who was their father, they dared not face the dangers of that journey—the slave-traders, the hostile tribes, the difficulty of keeping their direction. Livingstone waited in Loanda a few weeks till health was restored. Then he packed up, and started again for the interior by the way he had come. It took him another year to reach Linyanti (September, 1855). It was nearly two years before he saw the sea again; and then it was the Indian Ocean that he saw. For he had crossed the continent to Quilimane, near the Zambesi's mouth.

Many gallant deeds have been done in the rough history of our explorers, and the years still add to their records. But we doubt if there is anything more gallant than the moment when, with his eyes upon the sea, Livingstone resolved to turn back, clinging to honor and letting honors go hang. No one would have said a word if he had left the carriers there. It would have been the usual and most natural thing to do. Why, at this very moment, upon that very shore, the Portuguese are taking credit to themselves because at last, under pressure of European indignation, they are "repatriating" a few of the plantation slaves from their cocoa islands by dumping them on the beach to starve or find their way home over hundreds of miles of country as best they can! It was a different spirit that made Livingstone "the wonder of his age," and has enshrined his memory as something almost divine. When at length, in December, 1856, Livingstone returned home, and the Geographical Society received him as few travellers have been received, Sir Roderick Murchison, the chairman, referring to this incident, remarked:—

"How much, indeed, must the influence of the British name be enhanced throughout Africa, when it has been promulgated that our missionary has thus kept his plighted word to the poor natives who faithfully stood by him!"

We do not know why it is that the temper of our own time appears rapidly to have degenerated in this respect. Perhaps it comes of lust for rubber dividends, perhaps from fear of another Power's growing influence. We only know for certain that when an atrocious system of slavery, concealed under legal subterfuges, is exposed in the very Portuguese colony through which Livingstone made his way, our country now remains almost unmoved; and that when the Geographical Society two or three years ago received an eminent explorer of the Congo basin, the Chairman publicly thanked the explorer for having made no reference in his discourse to so unpleasant or debatable a subject as the treatment of the natives. It was not by that spirit that Livingstone "enhanced the influence of the British name."

That sense of unyielding honor and the sense of uncontrollable indignation at the misery which the touch of Europe seemed always to bring upon the natives were the mainsprings of Livingstone's "magic," and it is they which give his name an attraction surpassing that of other explorers who have almost equalled him in mere discovery. Those qualities are felt in the rules he laid down for all members of the expedition on his second great journey in the region of Lake Nyassa, Shiré, and the Lower Zambesi. They are felt also in the long tragedy of his closing years, when, alone, enfeebled, and unprovided, in the midst of murderous slave-raiders, he clung with desperate honor to his appointed task of discovering whether the great watershed west of Tanganyika poured the Lualaba to the Congo or the Nile. And it is felt, again, when, on that May Day just forty years ago, his few remaining natives found the great Master kneeling beside his bed at Ilala, and set off in their devotion to carry his body over all the miles of danger and difficulty to the coast. Ghastly as the history of the white man's intrusion into Africa has been, such an example sheds a glimmer of redemption upon the darkness. Such influence as the British name possesses is not only enhanced by such an example; it is entirely due to it, and to the few who have followed it. For, unless he could point to Livingstone and to one or two men endued with his spirit, what kind of a fiend from Hell would the African see in every European?

FIRSTLINGS.

THE sunshine on the garden is like the brilliant preparation of an empty stage. The soft touch of a very pleasant temperature is a great deal in itself, but still more as an atmosphere for some special happening. Sunshine and a south wind are the soul of a fine day, but, in spite of our utmost effort, we cannot realise the concept of a soul without a body. We cannot have sunshine without something for the sun to shine on, even if it be only yellow gravel and green grass, both of them grey when there is no sun. Suddenly, the Spring day has broad scarlet wings, masterful and precise in their stroke as well-trained oars. They flash down and up and along the hedge of greening syringa, over and almost away, then they return and settle with instant check on the warm gravel. The scarlet is compounded of yellow and black and a deep red chestnut, marked tigerishly and with boldly broken mosaic, a thing of astounding beauty, like jewels dropped into a land that has never seen jewels before, jewels that wink with the ecstasy of being alive, and which if we breathe will fly up from the ground and become wings of the sunshine again.

Only a tortoiseshell butterfly? Nay, it is the butterfly, the first one of Spring. In its person butterflydom is discovered for the year. It is like the first visit to the Pole. The second counts half as much, the third a quarter, the fourth an eighth. The rich butter-colored brimstone met sauntering along the hedgerow a day or two later creates perhaps as much admiration as the tortoiseshell. Then comes the orange-tip with the cuckoo flowers. It comes to a more richly prepared scene, enters on a warmer and more flowery chord of Spring's music, and because it comes from this year's chrysalis, and is not a hibernated butterfly, it ranks as

a firstling. The August fritillary and even the clouded yellow are rather part of the background of high summer than personages coming into a scene prepared for them. Call one of these "only a butterfly," but not the first butterfly of Spring.

How perfectly some of these early personages answer their cue! The pink dead nettle, everywhere common on cultivated land, is just now coming into maximum bloom. Its blossom clearly belongs to one particular species of bee, *Anthophora pilipes*, and just as surely as the blossom is, the bee is there also. Not the very first of the solitary bees, but head and shoulders more remarkable than those that precede it. The brilliant dashes of the male from flower to flower always exceed the memories of last year. The brightness of his straw-colored coat and the exuberance of the mocassins of the middle leg that give him, and through him the species, its name, are still more striking, partly no doubt because, before we see the last of them, they have become bleached by May sunshine. He comes first by several days, then his coal-black mate makes her appearance, soon dangling her bright yellow pollen baskets as she collects food for the next generation. She is quite a long time with us; her freshness has to contend with an increasing string of other new-comers, but she remains a leading personage, and we look for her eagerly next year.

Another perfect piece of timing belongs to the rendezvous between the gooseberry blossom and the queen social wasp. When you see her golden body glancing in the sun elsewhere, you adjourn to the gooseberry patch, and there find the bushes in blossom, and several more queen wasps about. Here and now must the youth attend who hopes to win the price of a penny a head set upon this potential mother of thousands. She is a veritable dragon, unthinkably hot and fierce for so early a month, every spring therefore an astonishing portent. It is an affair of daring to knock her down with one's cap, to miss killing her, and allow her to get up. She does not go away at once, but swings to and fro round the head of her audacious assailant. You cannot help thinking that she is going to revenge the insult with a sting that shall be remembered, and which we dread almost as much as death. The idea of revenge, however, is peculiar to mankind and a few of the great beasts. The wasp that is not defending a home is harmless, or only stings to escape the actual pressure of fingers. Nevertheless, the first one with its deep buzz and efficient yellow armor seems like an adventure as well as a renewal.

We do not know how early some would like to have the first cuckoo. To hunt the cuckoo in February is a senseless quest, comparable with that of looking for figs on thistles. Of course, if we look well or rather hard for him, we can find him, as we can find German airships and other wonders that are not there. For our part, we are content to wait till he really comes, and the sunnier the April day when he does come the better are we pleased. But we like the bold thrush that builds in the holly bush or oak stump carrying last year's leaves, before there is new drapery on the hedges, and gives us almost in winter a view of sky-blue eggs. Bird-nesting has been hopeful for a fortnight past, and a cosy hedge at the side of the wood makes us ache for the first egg. It is not there, but the bare nest, fresh from the plasterer's art, is in itself a wonder. So is the sight of two chaffinches, one plain and the other colored, close together in all their hoppings as though a string united them. Birds do not look at one another when they love, or does the fact that a bird only sees with one eye at a time blind us? Not even when a male spreads tail and wings and makes a shop-window of his entire beauty does the hen seem to take the least notice. And our two chaffinches seem to feel each other's presence, to hear the flutter of each wing, and to keep within an inch or two of one another by a sort of magnetic attraction rather than by sight.

The last person in our thoughts suddenly strikes us in the eye as we walk by the bird-nesting hedge. There is much brown earth on the bank that ground-ivy and stitch-wort will cover and decorate; dark brown cavities

and light brown prominences, black sticks and dead leaves bleached almost to white. A far bolder pattern comes up like the picture on a photographic plate, concentrated black-and-brown, zig-zagged, coiled, impressive even before it is understood. The first snake, a deadly adder, wrapped about itself in the sun, getting venom from the dancing, vigorous warmth that brought the butterfly to life. The adder of a month hence is a hardly believed vision of something that melted away as soon as seen. Its vertebræ have been oiled by the sunshine, its rubber muscles revived, and it responds automatically to the mischievous human tread. But to-day the adder is as lethargic as the newly awakened wood ants that slowly wag their stiff legs in the sun that shall give them lightning speed. The snake uncoils and retreats, but with the air of being bored, and is so slow in getting itself away that the temptation to seize it by the tail cannot be resisted. After all, the first snake demands its own treatment.

A diary may be had or prepared, giving the dates of all the first appearances. They will only be average dates, however, the earliest and the latest often being a fortnight and sometimes a month apart. The approach of Spring is not a humdrum march, but a dance with twirls, glides backward, tears, frowns, and even cruelty between warmer and warmer smiles. Sometimes our friends come at unhappy times. The cuckoo is drenched by rain that is beyond an April joke, the snake may be found chilled, and can be warmed in the bosom if we have a mind; the wasp is found sadly looking out of window instead of buzzing along the hedge. We have just seen the first humble bee thrown on her back by a pitiless March blast. Perhaps it was the swallow's fault for being so forward with its palm. It was not the right entry on the part of the humble bee, though you would think that her thick coat of frieze would have kept her jolly, even in the March wind. She varies the eternal play by coming indoors, and getting a warm-up where no wind can reach her. The smell of honey makes her swing her wonderful chin-strap, and get that useful long tongue to work. To-morrow the sun will shine, and she shall take her place with the other queens on the flowering currant. They will cut a finer picture than she did to-day; but she is the first.

Short Studies.

THE GREAT TRAGEDY.

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A PASSION PLAY to my ignorant mind was synonymous with Ober Ammergau, and so it was with a feeling of surprise that I saw a pictured notice in a South German town announcing that a series of these representations was being given at Erl, in the Tyrol. The fact slipped my consciousness, but in a Viennese hotel I again ran across the poster with its arresting golden background and the pair of dark, stolid peasants gazing at a pitiful crucifix. Once more on the walls of a medieval Italian city the now familiar picture claimed my regard. The same advertisement in three different countries gives a sense of the inevitable. I packed my handbag and set off.

And now, behold, I am arrived at the little Bavarian station specified on the poster. It is three or four miles from Erl, but, alas! the conveyances promised "to meet every train" are lacking. One ramshackle fly does, indeed, stand there, but a young German is already bargaining with the driver. My fellow-tourist, "although on pleasure bent," seems like Mrs. Gilpin to have "a frugal mind." He gives an annoyed shrug, and then suddenly rushing back, curtly asks me to share the cab and the fare. I am amused at his struggle between economy and Anglophobia. A honeymoon couple now comes up, also bent for Erl. The tension is relieved, the tariff still further lowered.

We drive along a much signboarded road that crosses the valley and then winds along the pine-clad hills. The weather is dull—one of those unbecoming days that

suck the color and interest out of any landscape. Presently we rattle through a street bordered by wooden chalets. Erl is only distinguished from the hundreds of other villages around by a magnified barn at the farther edge, before which we draw up. This is the new theatre. I am grateful for the simple white walls and red-tiled roof, although the five-mark entrance ticket smacks of sophistication. As I go in, the mingled odor of freshly-sawn wood and massed humanity brings up a sudden memory of Earl's Court. A purist for the primitive might cavil at the careful slope of the auditorium and the mechanical "spring-up" seats, but the prospect of a seven hours' performance silences such criticism. Moreover, a village hall, with a larger seating capacity than the total village population, is in itself so great a paradox as to overshadow all others. Formerly, at the Erl play, no doubt, as at all primitive performances, the bigger crowd was on the stage, and not before it. Indeed, as I sit passive, I wonder whether the dwindling ratio of performers to audience may not give an index of decadence. Our modern football matches, where thirty thousand watch thirty, recall gladiatorial Rome.

Yet when the play begins, I realise that here in Erl, even in these degenerate days, the majority of the actual villagers must be employed either on the stage or in some attendant capacity. The entry of Christ into Jerusalem suggests not a stage crowd, but a population. Little toddlers are holding the hands of genuine bigger sisters; babes are being carried on the breasts that suckled them. The very flocks and herds are pressed into the service; they figure in several of the tableaux that are interspersed through the performance. One of these shows us the "Good Shepherd." The human part is so well cast that the flock have no fear, even amid such strange pastures. The wise sheep, secure in their shepherd, browse contentedly; they even seem to bleat in chorus to his song. A little lamb runs to its dam with joyfully agitated tail. I notice, as is usual in the flocks of these parts, that there is one black back amid the surging white hides. A further scene showing the solitary black sheep at the foot of the cross suggests the origin of the custom. It is all so natural that I wonder suddenly if the real life is not on the stage. We, the audience, are the show—phantom figures speaking strange tongues from a world beyond the mountains.

Meanwhile the play is unrolling before me. It is very slow, and in parts extraordinarily impressive. At first the Christ is bitterly disappointing. The man's voice is jarring, his nose shrewish and rather red. The whole personality lacks magnetism; there is no hint of latent force. This peasant might be obstinate, I feel, but it would be the obstinacy of weakness and stupidity. In consequence, the overturning of the money-changers' tables is merely theatrical—an unpardonable sin. How ridiculous to have chosen such a man for the part! Yet somehow as the scenes go on, I find my attitude changing. The man's nose is no longer a stumbling-block. The harshness has faded from his voice. Is the change in myself, I wonder—a sign of one's accommodative power? Or can it be that with the passing of the hours the actor is growing out of himself into the part? By the time the Last Supper is reached, all the defects are forgotten. This is the most wonderful story in the world, I realise suddenly. The sheer drama of it; Christ and Judas sitting in sacred fellowship, the One knowing that He is betrayed, the other knowing that he is the betrayer, yet partaking of the Body and the Blood. Had the story been less great, or the acting less perfect in its simplicity, the situation would be impossible. Imagine Christ methodically tying a towel round his waist, and then washing and drying the rude feet of the disciples! Now he breaks the bread, and feeds the kneeling company, putting a piece into each open mouth in turn. What would be the feelings of our susceptible Censor, I reflect, at such a scene, with its suggestion of "Open your mouth and shut your eyes"? Would even the most daring Parisian manager be bold enough to produce it? Yet here at Erl no one smiles. No one wants to smile. Even apart from the deeper significance, the action is no more funny than

that of a mother washing and feeding her babe. It has the innate gravity of all natural happenings.

Though the audience does not smile inappropriately, there is yet plenty of "comic relief." These peasants are on far too intimate terms with their religion not to laugh at it. There are comedy scenes in this passion play, just as there are comedy scenes in the old cathedrals. I recall the thirteenth-century choir stalls in even our English Christchurch that might be cartoons from "Fliegende Blätter." Is true reverence always irreverent, I muse? Perhaps it is only when a creed ceases to be respected and becomes respectable that it is cased in frigid solemnity. We are afraid that an honest guffaw might shatter its flimsy structure. But here at Erl the religion of these simple folk seems of a stouter make. It is for everyday wear, not merely kept in tissue paper for Sunday use.

Hence, I explain to myself, the absence of any attempt to make even the apostles solemn or impressive. They have only the dignity of reality. For, after all, these are the common laboring folk, whom Christ once gathered around Him. How rare it is—the thought occurs to me suddenly—to see working-men on the stage; as rare as to see gentlemen. A stage crowd is always actors. I notice, however, that though there is no studied saintliness, there is also no defiance of convention. The unconsciousness that prevents artificiality, proscribes innovation. The Evangelist John, for instance, is typically young and blond. The Erl peasants would no doubt feel a swarthy representation of Saint John as ludicrous as a jigsaw portrait of him in cubes. It is true that field work has turned the youth's fair skin to a lively scarlet; but this may be unconsciously accurate. The Palestine sun would surely have had the same effect upon his prototype, although ignored by the painters.

Saint Peter is even more unusual, and at the same time more conventional. This elderly, thickset man, with a bald head and a snub nose, is hardly my conception of an apostle, but he might be a poor fisherman of almost any country—except, indeed, Palestine. It is impossible to imagine him a Jew. But, so far, there has been no effort to give the characters a Hebraic cast. And perhaps, so I reflect, this is in essence more true. How could these Bavarian countryfolk feel at home with a Semitic sainthood?

It is the rendering of Judas Iscariot that comes as the greatest surprise. Perhaps this also is a conventional interpretation, and it is merely my ignorance that is surprised. Frankly, Judas is "the funny man" of the piece. Two peasant women sitting in front of me, who sob heartbrokenly at Mary's tragic foreboding over her Son, dry their eyes as Judas appears. Hearty and sympathetic laughter greets his naive delight on receiving the thirty pieces of silver. "Ha! silberklang," he chuckles, "wie tust dem Ohr so wohl!" We can guess at the jovial and tasty meals that he is promising himself; indeed, they would be particularly grateful after the austere supper of the apostles. It is a kindly rendering of Judas's character, and perhaps a true one. For the first time I get a feeling that he is one of those "who know not what they do." It makes his subsequent repentance inevitable. The horror and remorse were acted with a good deal of power. "A second Cain, a murderer of God," the poor wretch styles himself. Then a little devil, straight out of a pre-Raphaelite canvas, throws on a rope. Judas takes the hint, and is climbing a tree to hang himself when the curtain artistically falls.

So long as the play keeps on these simple, incredible lines, I find it convincing. It only fails when an attempt is made at realistic scenic effects. A great mechanical effort has been made in the Agony in the Garden. In consequence, the chief agony is obviously that of the angel bearing the chalice who is being jerked up and down an inclined plane. The five or six lumpy angels in the background might also be more passable were they not pursued by an erratic limelight. Moreover, my expectations as to their appearance are unduly raised by a transparency that intermittently obscures them. I

realise suddenly that only a very beautiful woman should dare to go veiled. Even the acting of the chief character in this scene appears to deteriorate, weighted down, as it is, with scenic complication.

With the chorus, however, we are back again on safe ground. This chorus walks on at intervals in a stiff, single line, linking us, I should imagine, with the Middle Ages. It consists of eight men and ten women all dressed in stiff, straight robes and gilt crowns. The hair of the women hangs down long and lank, and is conspicuously guiltless of any encouragement to curl. They take up their positions in a rigid semi-circle, the men in the centre, the women on the outer sides. Not only is their collective attitude fixed, their individual pose is equally unchanging. Each person in the right half of the row holds the left hand glued on the breast and the right arm rigid at the side. Each person in the left half of the row has the right hand on the breast and the left arm by the side. This attitude is never varied. They might be trussed for the occasion. Now and then the chorus sings, if the loud, raucous sounds produced can be termed singing. Tune seems to be their one scope for individuality. And this is Germany, the vaunted land of music! But, I tell myself, more melodious singing might be out of harmony with these queer, rigid singers. I begin to wonder whether they are not the primitive wooden saints out of the neighboring churches come to a semi-life. Nature appears to be holding up the glass to art. But perhaps the grotesque appearance of these early images was not due to lack of artifice, as I had always imagined. This stiff, lank-haired, expressionless creature was possibly the twelfth-century "type of female beauty." After all, will our modern type look less peculiar and unattractive in seven hundred years?

And what a contrast between such a chorus and the classical Greek chorus with its dancing origin! A memory comes to me of a little church at Loches in France. The church is eleventh-century or thereabouts, but an old Roman altar is used for the font. The difference between the rude wrestlers and runners of the Pagan font and the stiff, draped saints, carved on the walls of the Christian church, is, I feel, the same as between the two choruses. One is kinetic and the other static. Aggressive motion is surely the keynote of the classical teaching; that of the Christian, still submission. The old gods were mighty warriors, keen lovers, great hunters. Our God hangs motionless upon the Cross. How could the medieval saints move with classical freedom in their hampering robes and haloes? The very attitude of Christian prayer precludes mobility. But perhaps the difference, I reflect, is not so much between Christianity and Hellenism as between East and West. Only, and this is the curious part, it is we Westerners who have taken a creed of the passive East. And if we only give it lip service, it is perhaps because the doctrines are so alien to our nature. We preach of the other cheek, while we smite with the mailed fist. Still, theoretically, East is West and West is East, and ever the twain have met. This Erl passion-play is the outcome.

But now the great tragedy that is going on before me is drawing towards its close. My errant thoughts come back. I begin to have no consciousness for anything else. The play is ceasing to be a play. I see Him scourged, and I shrink at each dreadful blow. I see Him brought a captive before Pontius Pilate, who, uneasy and compunctious, is forced into an unwilling condemnation. I see the bitter journey onward. I see Him fall. I see Him ever goaded further. I see Him nailed upon the Cross. My God, this is reality!

There must be some mechanical explanation. I tell myself that this man cannot be crucified every few days. The stage is dim; by peering, I begin to discern a small, sloping block supporting the feet. But the hands are surely nailed. Suddenly a crash of thunder peals outside. The rain beats down upon the roof in torrents. They are speaking on the stage, but we cannot hear them. One dreadful cry rings out: "Mein Gott, mein Gott, warum hast du mich verlassen!" Flash after flash of lightning blazes out the ghastly scene. Mary, the Mother, is at the foot of the Cross. No woman could bear

it. She will go mad. There comes a deafening roar just over us. It goes on and on. The veil of the temple must be rent in twain. Then I see His head is sunk. The torture is over. He is dead.

Slowly, very slowly they go on with their dreadful business. They take off the crown of thorns. They drag out the resisting nails. They lift down the limp, dead body. Yes, it is dead; I can swear to it. With my eyes I have seen the Crucifixion. It is an awful experience.

Then I find myself outside, standing on the sodden grass. The rain is teeming down. There is a bobbing sea of umbrellas. I do not know where I am, nor where to go. I do not even realise that I have no lodging for the night. A kindly peasant, who, I dimly remember, was standing near to me as doorkeeper ages and ages ago, suddenly hurries me into a black tarpaulin-covered omnibus. Once more this is the last seat.

But as I drive along in the leaky 'bus, and afterwards as I sink gratefully into a corner of the sheltering train, the real world again claims me. It is the twentieth century, I remind myself, nineteen hundred and twelve Anno Domini—the words have a new significance. This is a red-plush, upholstered railway-carriage, and I am travelling in solitary grandeur, second-class. (No wonder the ticket clerk was shocked at my crazy extravagance.) My feet are cold and soaking wet. My hat is a ruin. Yes, this is the reality. That was only a make-believe in which I have been living; a mere play.

But if it was a play—my anger flares up suddenly—then it was an undesirable play; it was the most un-Christian play that I have ever seen. What has Christianity, the creed of love and life, to do with this ostentation of blood and horror, reducing Christ to the same level of physical suffering as the two thieves. It was a desecration.

Another aspect of the play comes over me, and again I feel hot with indignation. This passion-play should be presented as the great epic of the Jewish people. Instead, it is given as a lesson in anti-Semitism. All through, the contrast was sharply drawn between the good Christians and the wicked Jews. How many of those present realised that every one of the "good Christians" was also a "wicked Jew?" It is the Jewish tragedy that there is but one word for race and for religion. In the name of the Gentle Savior, I saw the race-hatred inflamed towards His own people. A passion-play they call it. It is rather a play of passion. Perhaps this is the true Agony. Yes; Christ was doubly crucified at Erl this afternoon.

E. AYRTON ZANGWILL.

Letters to the Editor.

THE SCOTTISH TEMPERANCE BILL.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—In the letter which he contributed to your columns last week, Mr. Duncan Millar makes a number of assumptions upon which he ingeniously, and very skilfully, constructs an elaborate argument. Perhaps you will allow me to examine a few of those assumptions.

He suggests, in the first place, that the "main argument," advanced by your correspondents in criticism of the Government's refusal to accept an option of disinterested management, is that it violates the principle of local option as expressed in the formula of "trust the people." Surely, this is not so? The letters which you published on the 8th inst., seem to me to take much stronger ground, and to have direct reference to the practical value of disinterested management in districts where the other options are not expected to be largely used. That certainly is the argument upon which we who advocate permissive powers of experiment "mainly" rely. And it is not a theoretical argument. It has the force of valuable experience behind it. It is upon that experience that we found our plea. We say that a system of control which has accomplished such remarkable results as the system of disinterested management has achieved in the city of Gothenburg and elsewhere is a legitimate and desirable option in a Bill which aims at the

restraint and restriction of the liquor traffic, and on every ground of reason, logic, and common-sense, ought to be made available to such areas as care to adopt it.

This is our "main" argument. The argument selected by Mr. Millar is a minor one, but, I admit, important. I must remind Mr. Millar, however, that it was first used, and has since been employed, only in response to the challenging argument of himself and others. Right through the debates in the House of Commons, and in numerous speeches outside, the case for the Bill, as introduced, was based upon a broad plea of democratic self-government. Its object, Mr. Duncan Millar himself told us, was "to obtain the opinion of the ratepayers in any particular district on the subject of licensing." He wanted the Bill "to enable the people of Scotland to enforce their wishes in regard to a trade whose existence can only be justified by the needs of the community." The Bill, another supporter told us, "simply recognises the fact that the people themselves are the best judges of their own wants and conveniences." The aim and effect of the Bill, a third supporter told us, was to transfer "discretionary power, at present exercised by a more or less unrepresentative bench," and "place it in the hands of the people in the localities affected"; or, as another speaker put it, to "supersede the agent (i.e., the licensing authority) by his principal (i.e., the ratepayer)." Yes; but why limit the application of this democratic plea to the option of veto and reduction? Why not allow it in the case of other methods of restriction? Mr. Millar says, quite properly, that the argument based on the democratic principle of "trust the people" "can only be applied within the strictest limits." That is true, but why do veto and reduction naturally lie within those limits, and disinterested management as naturally outside? The appeal of a democratic principle becomes a little suspect when it is found to cover only the options of which Mr. Millar and his friends approve, and to exclude other restrictive powers of which they happen to disapprove.

Mr. Millar seeks to escape from an awkward dilemma by suggesting that we who advocate disinterested management are not prepared to "trust the people" fully, and he instances such matters as an option of increase of licences, the allocation of profits under disinterested management, and municipalisation as proof of his suggestion. He is, perhaps, a little over-confident in his use of this argument, but, in any case, his illustrations are unfortunate. Any proposed extension of the options in the Bill must, to be legitimate, be consistent with the motive and aim of the Bill. Does Mr. Millar suggest that an option to increase the number of licences in an area is so consistent? Similarly, his suggestion that the determination by statute of the conditions which are to govern experiments in disinterested management, e.g., the use of the surplus profits, is undemocratic and lacking in "trust of the people," is surely a curious suggestion from a supporter of the veto provisions of the Bill. It would be quite as "logical" for me to suggest that Mr. Millar himself does not fully accept the formula of "trust the people," because he refuses to allow each locality to determine for itself the proportion of the electorate, or the majority of votes, required to carry local veto! So far as the third illustration is concerned, Mr. Millar is aware that no vote was taken at any stage of the Bill on municipalisation, but he has apparently forgotten that its one advocate admitted that it is "not in practical politics." These facts make his illustrations irrelevant, and his deductions from them unsound.

Further, in suggesting, as he does, that a disinterested management option was rejected "on precisely the same grounds" as an option to increase licences, &c., he is ignoring a cardinal fact that was admitted by Mr. McKinnon Wood. An option to increase the number of licences in an area is plainly opposed to the principle and purpose of the Bill. An option of disinterested management, on the other hand, as Mr. McKinnon Wood frankly admitted at an early stage of the proceedings on the Bill, is in no way opposed to the principle of the Bill.

And what does Mr. Millar mean by suggesting that "disinterested management is admittedly still in the experimental stage"? "Admitted" by whom? And in what sense is it "experimental"? Is a method justly called "experimental" after forty or fifty years of approved trial on a large scale?

Mr. Millar's further suggestion that "within the ranks of those who support" disinterested management "there is the widest divergence of view as to the necessity of securing a monopoly" within a given area is also singularly ill-founded and inexact. The Scottish Threefold Option Association, which, many years ago, did admirable propagandist work for disinterested management in Scotland, always advocated a monopoly. The Threefold Option Bill, which was introduced into Parliament in 1898 and 1899 ("backed" in each year by the present Lord Advocate), provided for a monopoly. The Scottish Temperance Legislation Board (of which the late Lord Peel was President) has always advocated a monopoly, and each of its draft Bills has provided for a monopoly. The amendment which (with the approval of that Board) I moved in Grand Committee last year explicitly provided for a monopoly. Mr. Millar ignores these facts altogether, and founds his suggestion entirely upon a misleading reference to the proceedings in the House of Lords. He says: "In Committee of the House of Lords, the proposal was first limited to the granting of such licences to the Public-house Trust Companies as the Licensing Court might think fit, and to new licences." That is hardly a fair recital of the facts. The first scheme proposed in the Lords was Lord Balfour of Burleigh's, which provided for a complete monopoly. That scheme was provisionally withdrawn to allow of the drafting of a new Ballot Schedule; and Lord Salisbury's scheme (which is the one quoted by Mr. Millar) was provisionally (and only provisionally) inserted. It was clearly stated, and well understood, that Lord Balfour adhered to his monopoly proposal, and would press it on Report. That part of his amendment was never, in any real sense, withdrawn, and was actually inserted on Report. When the Bill returned to the Commons, Mr. McKinnon Wood allowed himself openly to appeal to Conservative and "trade" prejudice by emphasising the completeness of the suggested monopoly, and challenging members on the Opposition Benches (who are held by him and by some of his supporters to be the special custodians of the interests of the liquor trade) to say if they were prepared to hand over even the hotels and restaurants to a Disinterested Management Company. Such an appeal could only be mischievous, and its immediate fruit was a whittling down of the scope of the proposed scheme of disinterested management. For that result Mr. McKinnon Wood is alone responsible.

I pass by other minor assumptions in Mr. Millar's letter, and will add but one word of comment on his extraordinary plea that because Licensing Courts in Scotland can now, at their discretion, grant new licences to Public-house Trusts (without, be it remarked, a single one of the indisputably salutary safeguards and restrictions suggested by us) "there is, in fact, nothing to prevent the supporters of disinterested management continuing to pursue their own policy in Scotland under the present system"! I confess that the plea is an amazing one when regard is had to the known limitations of the present Public-house Trust movement, and to the particular provisions and restrictions contained in the scheme lately submitted to Parliament. But this apart, Mr. Millar's argument is surely of the "boomerang" type? If the object of the Bill be, as he and his friends tell us, to transfer "discretionary power at present exercised by a more or less unrepresentative bench" and "place it in the hands of the people in the localities affected," or, in other words, to "supersede the agent by his principal," why exclude disinterested management from the transfer? It surely cannot be that Mr. Millar prefers that such limited experiments in disinterested management as may, under existing circumstances, be possible, should be made under the least hopeful conditions?—Yours, &c.,

ARTHUR SHERWELL.

March 17th, 1913.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—As a Scotsman and a Radical, I am constrained to write you this letter, because of the comments which appear in your issue of February 22nd, concerning the attitude of the House of Lords towards the Scottish Temperance Bill. I find myself in complete disagreement with the whole tone and temper of your criticism. I recollect that, previous to the historic conflict between the Liberal Party and the House

of Lords, when the Government was perpetually creating despair in the hearts of its most loyal supporters by reason of the meekness with which it submitted to the rebuffs of the Hereditary Chamber, I used to turn to your columns for inspiration, and invariably found therein vigorous expression of my own thoughts and opinions. There was substance in your criticism of those days. But now, when, for the first time since the passing of the Parliament Act, the Government is resolutely facing the Lords, and firmly pressing forward with the measure for which it has a clear mandate from the Scottish people, you endeavor to darken its counsels by urging the adoption of the Lords' amendments.

Surely the historian of the future will regard this unholy alliance of THE NATION and the House of Lords with the same curious feeling of which the student of literary biography is conscious when he reads of Voltaire's association with the Quakers!

You say that the Scottish Temperance Bill would have been conspicuously improved by the insertion of the amendments which would have (1) extended the time-limit from five to ten years, and (2) introduced a new option of disinterested management. Your comment regarding the proposals for compulsory insurance is futile, as the whole scheme was repudiated by those engaged in the liquor trade. Does it give you any satisfaction, however, to learn that the attitude of THE NATION towards those amendments is precisely similar to that of the two organs of priggish Tory respectability in Scotland, the "Glasgow Herald" and the "Scotsman"?

You aver that "by this time, we ought to have learned the lesson that temperance reform goes furthest when it goes most carefully." Exactly! Why, then, do you urge the introduction of the extremely dubious principle of disinterested management, which commands little or no support in Scotland, and is the subject of keen controversy in temperance circles? "But," you continue, "the Bill was hard ridden in the Commons, and the voice of knowledge and experience was barely listened to." "The voice of knowledge and experience" (presumably those Members who supported the amendments) consisted of Mr. Arthur Sherwell, who knows nothing of Scottish opinion; a handful of quixotic Scottish Liberals, who carry absolutely no authority in the counsels of the movement behind the Bill; and Mr. Balfour—a portentous combination; for Mr. Balfour is no friend of the Scottish Temperance Bill.

My protest, however, is chiefly directed against the assurance with which you set aside the deliberate conclusions of the majority of the Scottish Liberal Members, who supported the Government throughout, and who will continue to do so, secure in the knowledge that they have at their backs the great mass of enlightened Scottish opinion.

You are glad enough to have the driving-power of Scottish Radicalism at your elbow when your abortive Education Bills occupy the field; but when the Scottish Members attempt to place on the Statute Book proposals which have been the commonplaces of Liberal platforms in Scotland for thirty years, you are all for moderation and compromise.

These, sir, are the observations of one who writes, not from an editorial chair in London, but in the midst of a Scottish industrial community. There is still a future for the Liberal Party in Scotland; but it must set its face firmly against those of its "friends" who speak of "a more moderate line" being taken, and press steadfastly forward until its task is accomplished.—Yours, &c.,

SCOTTISH RADICAL.

WHAT IS THE ARMY FOR?

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—On July 13th, 1895, the "Times" published a long letter from me, which commenced a sustained and successful effort to improve the business management of the Navy and the Army. The times were critical, the state of unreadiness was appalling, and the results attained, owing to the steady and continuous pressure of the press, momentous for good.

To-day the most eminently representative and knowledgeable of the active and able soldiers responsible for the Army, although they may be satisfied with the men and

other things which are essential to its successful use, maintain that nothing really effective can be attempted, much less done, because neither Government nor Opposition, nor anyone in authority, agrees what the Army is for, or what it is maintained to do.

There is not another nation of importance in the world which maintains an army that has not a purposeful policy for its use, upon which to rest the number of soldiers voted and the purposes and character of its organisation. Why is it, then, that Great Britain, in regard to its Army, exhibits to the world the lamentable spectacle of a paralytic? The answer is: National Defence has become increasingly the catspaw of party politics. Such a state of affairs is not business; it places the party leaders on both sides before their countrymen in the most unenviable position, and threatens our nation and Empire with grave disaster, and possibly destruction.

May I venture to inquire of the leaders of the two great political parties why it is that all questions relating to the Army and Navy are not treated like the foreign policy of the country as outside party altogether? The position at the moment is that, instead of having a carefully thought-out policy, resting upon the needs and requirements of the great interests at stake, we have all sorts of proposals for and against National Service, a Territorial Army, a hybrid between these two plans, and a host of minor schemes to do this or that where the Army is concerned. How can the Government or the Opposition or the country at large express any opinion worth a brass farthing on any of these momentous questions, until it is decided by agreement, in the interests of the nation and Empire, what the Army is required to do? What man is there amongst us in the Army, or out of it, who can demonstrate, for practical purposes, why the Regular Army should consist of six divisions, or why we should not have one Division, or ten Divisions, or no Divisions at all? The same principle and questions apply with equal force to the fourteen Divisions of the Territorial Army. The truth is that it is the first and immediate duty of the House of Commons to show that, whatever the party color of its members may be, they are patriots first, by insisting, before they vote any more money for Army purposes, that matters of National Defence shall be treated as foreign policy is now treated—namely, as outside and apart from party. They would further insist that the Government and the Opposition shall enter into conference and agree, without a moment's avoidable delay, upon a national policy of defence, which shall clearly lay down what the Army is required to do.

If you, or anyone who has the means, will consult our active military leaders and highly placed officers to-day, it will be found that this demand for an exhibition of patriotism on the part of the House of Commons and the enforcement of business methods, once exhibited, can settle all the matters in dispute in regard to Army requirements without practical difficulty or delay. Living Englishmen, who constitute the very backbone of the people of these islands, are everywhere indignant at the present mess in military and defensive matters created by the selfish and unstatesmanlike placing of so-called party interests always before everything else.

As I write, the leaders of both parties have their opportunity. Will they take it, or will they blindly disregard the plain warnings of history, and so leave National Defence, in regard to military matters at any rate, in the position of Mr. Winkle, who went out shooting rooks and hit a small boy in his nethermost parts?

A final word. Can it be possible that any living politician of position will deny that, so far as policy is concerned, the treatment of foreign affairs and of National Defence, to be effective, must be absolutely interdependent.—Yours, &c.,

HENRY BURDETT.

The Lodge, Porchester Square, W.

March 17th, 1913.

DICKENS AND LITTLE BETHEL.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—I don't care a straw about incapacity; but I should be sorry that an old Fleet Street companion should think me guilty of unkindness. I will therefore point out

to Mr. Mudie Smith what is the matter with him. He is suffering from the "mania of persecution," whereby the mind sees a small and hostile purpose in events that have a large and impartial purpose. I suppose I am a controversial person; but in the passage on Little Bethel he denounces, I was not controversial, but merely critical. The question was not what I think of Dissent, but what Dickens thought of it; and, above all, why he thought it. But people like Mr. Mudie Smith cannot believe that I ever indulge in what Arnold called the free play of the mind; the saying of things merely because they are interesting and true. In these columns I once suggested (because I thought it interesting and true) that when we blamed Jews only for "bigotry" and praised them only for "liberality," we might well be backing up the cynical and stock-jobbing side against the faithful and spiritual side of Israel. This, which seems to me a temperate and tenable view, could only be got into your readers' heads in the form that I wanted to persecute Jews! In the same way, Mr. Mudie Smith lets a whole literary argument, full of all sorts of other illustrations, flow past him like a river, till he can hail, with a shout of excitement, the "attack on Nonconformity" for which he is always watching.

Now, what I was explaining about Dickens was this: that his judgments, right or wrong, have a special first-hand, racy quality about them; because they cannot be traced, like those of his contemporaries, to some theories that dictated their tastes. I give several examples. Thus, you cannot say of Dickens, as you might of Mill, that a hard political theory prevented him from liking the grace and glamor of aristocracy. Dickens simply saw the smart set in the street, and felt not the grace but the disgrace of it. This is true about Dickens; it does not prevent me, elsewhere in the book, when engaged in proving something else, from mentioning the nobler side of the oligarchy of Chatham and Fox. In the same impartial sense, I say you could not say of Dickens, as you might of Newman, that Oxford pedantry or Popish dogma forbade him to admire the Little Bethel. He was of the social class of Little Bethel, a Protestant, and a Radical. If he hated it as Kit did, I say it proves, not that his hate was justified, but that it was spontaneous, as was his hatred of the swells. But (as in the other case) this would not prevent me from citing the nobler side of Nonconformity, if it had been useful to me in my duty of literary criticism. Suppose, for instance, any intellectual quality in George Eliot could have been illustrated by reference to Rufus Lyon in "Felix Holt," I should at once have said that it was a magnificent study of the ardor, learning, and earnest logic belonging to some traditions of Dissent. This would have been quite consistent with what I said about Dickens. I did not say it, because Rufus Lyon did not illustrate any literary thesis of mine, and Little Bethel did. My critical method may be very bad for all I know; but I am sure it is much saner than Mr. Mudie Smith's.—Yours, &c.,

G. K. CHESTERTON.

March 19th, 1913.

"THE CHURCH MILITANT: NEW STYLE."

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Is not the strength of "the reactionary element in the Church," on which you comment, mainly due to the loss of the idea of a National Church? From the Reformation onwards the English Church has periodically "shed" its stronger and more progressive elements. These have gone off into Puritanism, Methodism, or undenominational religion of one sort or another; the weaker and less energetic being left behind. Hence the increase of the sectarian and the decrease of the national factor in the Church; hence the revival of medieval belief and ceremonial, with its tendency to reversion to type—lately illustrated by the secession of the Caldey community; hence the want of mental, moral, and religious backbone which finds expression, as you observe, in the so-called religious press.

It has come to be taken for granted, not only in clerical circles, that the affairs of the Church concern Anglicans only, and that ecclesiastical legislation by Parliament would be an injury to the rights and conscience of the Church—by which term is meant the clergy and laymen of the diocesan conference type. "The laymen who, as a general rule, figure

in such assemblies," wrote Dean Stanley a generation ago—and it is truer now than it was then—"do not represent the true lay mind of the Church, still less the lay intelligence of the whole country. They are often excellent men, given to good works, but they are also usually the partisans of some special clerical school; they are, in short, clergymen under another form rather than the real laity themselves."

Not till a truer perspective is regained will the Church rise to its calling. The affairs of a National Church concern not only its members, in the technical sense of the word—and the tendency is to give it an increasingly sectarian interpretation—but the nation as a whole. The impoverished Church needs an infusion of fresh and vigorous blood. This must come not from Churchmen—it is Churchmen who require it—but from English Christianity in the largest signification of the term. The first condition of better things is the assertion on the part of Free Churchmen, and the recognition on ours, of their claim to be regarded, in Stanley's words, as "Nonconforming members and ministers of the National Church." One would have hoped, under a Liberal Government, to find this claim admitted and upheld.—Yours, &c.,

A LIBERAL CHURCHMAN.

March 15th, 1913.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Your article on "The Church Militant: New Style" contains this surprising sentence: "After seven years of Liberal Government, hardly a Liberal bishop remains upon the Bench; and the reactionary element in the Church was never so strong." The article is mainly concerned about peace, and only incidentally Liberalism, and it is the former more than the latter which concerns me. The cause of peace possesses no more consistent supporters than the Bishops of Lincoln, Hereford, Oxford, Birmingham, Wakefield, and Winchester; and of these the Bishop of Lincoln was one of a very small number who was true to his principles when Asquith, Grey, and Haldane were backing up the Jingo and the Boer War. Is the writer aware of the existence of the Church Socialist League, and of its strenuous advocacy of International Peace and Disarmament? Hundreds of clergy are in its ranks, and hundreds more are connected with the Church of England Peace Society, with its President, the Bishop of Lincoln. Is the writer aware that a magazine, entitled "Optimist," is edited by a Churchman, financed by Churchmen, and has nearly one thousand subscribers amongst Churchmen? Its principles are those your article supports. But perhaps it is only Liberals who are "saved"; but, if so, what are we to say about the Naval Estimates?—Yours, &c.,

J. PROUDFOOT.

St. Peter's Vicarage, North Somercotes, R.S.O.,
Lincolnshire.

March 17th, 1913.

"WHAT THE GOVERNMENT HAVE TO FACE."

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—Mr. Zangwill's letter contains a sentence which indicates more, perhaps, than he intended. He tells us: "Mr. Asquith must go." I have for some time been convinced that the Suffragettes hate the Liberals more than they love votes for women. The most offensive feature in the militant campaign has been the persistent attempt to degrade Mr. Asquith. Mrs. Pankhurst and her party have long ceased any endeavor to influence him by reason, or to help those who work by reason, and have devoted themselves to a form of pressure to which no honorable man would yield. In effect, they have said to him: "Be a cur; give us the right to proclaim you a political coward for all time, or we will make war upon you!" And what a despicable kind of war it is! War when windows are smashed or letters damaged, alternating with appeals for the protection of the police or for release from imprisonment! Granted the difficulties were great. What better way out of them was suggested than that proposed by Mr. Asquith and frustrated only by the unexpected action of the Speaker? Granted a new difficulty has arisen owing to this action. Who should share the blame? Why did not suffragist M.P.'s, last summer, question the Speaker and ascertain his all-decisive opinion? You say Mr. Asquith has not offered a fair equivalent

for what has been taken away, and, at any rate, has not consulted his opponents as to what they would accept. How can negotiations be much better than a farce while this senseless militancy goes on? To those who really desire votes for women such a policy is maddening and sickening. Whatever it achieves, it will not fulfil the dictum, "Asquith must go." What are going, and going fast, are thousands of voters who once favored votes for women over to the other side. Nor can the non-militant suffrage societies escape responsibility for the ruin of their cause unless they denounce this policy in far stronger terms than they have yet done.

If it is still possible to consider a reasonable procedure, I should like to suggest that the House of Commons be allowed to divide on a resolution, free voting being permitted. Such a resolution should take the form of an Instruction to the Government to introduce a Bill granting votes to women. Mr. Asquith might be asked to accept the division on such a resolution precisely as he was willing to accept the division on the Franchise Bill Amendment.

One final suggestion. Stop forcible feeding. Send home women who are in danger of killing themselves by hunger strike, and when they are well again, bring them back to prison to finish their sentence. If, during their interval of liberty, they wish to leave the country, afford them every facility for doing so, but keep a sharp watch for their return.—Yours, &c.,

H. SHAEN SOLLY.

Parkstone, March 15th, 1913.

THE SPHINX AT GIZEH.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—I think it may be a matter of interest to those of your readers who are Egyptologists to learn that the latest researches upon the Great Sphinx at Gizeh have brought to light the following facts:—

1. The Sphinx is a gigantic work, consisting of natural rock sculptured into the form of a human head with the body of a lion, and is the most ancient monument in Egypt.
2. The tomb of King Menes, the first Egyptian Pharaoh, is within the Sphinx. This monarch made himself a god, and it was he who caused the Sphinx to be constructed.
3. The construction of the Sphinx is as follows:—
 - (a) There is a chamber in the head which is 60 feet long by 40 feet wide.
 - (b) There is a temple, dedicated to the sun, that rests within the paws.
 - (c) There are tunnels which connect the chamber in the head with the temple of the sun.
 - (d) Within the Sphinx are small pyramids. Many relics have been found, together with the "Crux Ansata," or Looped Cross—the symbol of the sun. Several of these relics are of gold, and have wires for little bells. It was alleged that the priests, upon sounding these bells, were enabled to summon back to earth the Kas, or shadowy selves, of the dead.

In summing up, we can but conclude that Egypt is a vast city, the interior of which may be completely excavated in the lapse of time; and, if this should come to pass, modern science and modern thought will stand amazed by the resources of science and degree of knowledge possessed by these ancient peoples, whose cities had attained to such advancement some thousands of years prior to the date assigned to the creation of man.—Yours, &c.,

HENRY J. NASH.

22, Dorset Gardens, Brighton.
March 12th, 1913.

ART AND THE ART CRITIC.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—May I add still one more point of view on this everlasting quarrel between artist and critic? It should be impossible for an artist to act honestly as a critic of art, for, apart from any creative quality he may possess, his training and specialised study must have resulted in the development of very decided opinions as to the interpretation of Nature, which become so settled in his mind as to be biassed and, therefore, of no general value to the world at large. The professional critic, on the other hand, usually

has both a wide knowledge of all that has gone before, and all that is being done at the moment, and this he brings to bear on the subject in conjunction with the average opinion of the public of the day, which, indeed, he properly represents. It would appear, therefore, on the surface, that the critic's opinion should be of more value than that of the man in the street, and entitle him to his self-erected pinnacle, as the public's artistic adviser. But is this attitude justified? The fact is, art is constantly in a state of flux, going up and down, rarely standing still; and whereas the best we can look for in a critic, who, it must be remembered, is not an originator, is that he represents the most progressive and enlightened section of public opinion, which, alas! he rarely does; yet any individual artist who happens to have that elusive creative spark, may be a generation ahead of his own day, and is therefore but rarely understood or appreciated.

This, of course, was the case with Whistler and Rodin forty years ago, while Alma-Tadema and others were being lauded to the skies by the professional critics, who, for lack of that same imaginative quality referred to, could not see beyond the popular standard during what was mostly a vapid period of art. In other words, though the critic may be usually ahead of the general public, he must necessarily be behind those few great craftsmen who are destined to hand down their influence to the next generation, and whose eager aspirations he is unable to comprehend. To understand a great artist (I do not mean necessarily a popular one) one must be educated up to his level.—Yours, &c.,

F. FLEMING BAXTER.

Arts Club, 40, Dover Street, W.
March 12th, 1913.

RURAL HOUSING.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The other day I listened to a most excellent exposition of this important question by a well-known expert, who quite rightly pointed out the disastrous results which must attend the putting up of cottages which have to be let at an uneconomic rent. The lecturer also laid stress on the reluctance of private enterprise to take such building in hand so long as no adequate return was to be expected for the money spent. At the same time, he showed clearly enough that the low rents, averaging about 1s. 6d. a week, now demanded of the agricultural laborer really amount to a complementary paying of wages in kind, since it is impossible to provide adequate housing accommodation for a rent under 3s. a week.

Now this 1s. 6d. a week indirectly paid to the laborer comes out of the farmer's pocket in one way or another. If he lets the cottages to the laborer for 3s. a week and gives 1s. 6d. a week more wages, the result would be the same on his balance-sheet. And even if the laborer rents his cottage direct from the landlord, it means that the farmer's rent is increased by the 78s. a year which the landlord would have had from the laborer as the economic rent if the farmer paid the laborer the 1s. 6d. more in weekly wages.

Under these circumstances, it seems to me that the most necessary step towards the much-needed reform of rural housing would be to have an Act of Parliament fixing a minimum rent of 3s. for cottages let to agricultural laborers, with the establishment of some kind of local Rent Board to carry out the necessary adjustments in existing contracts. Once this minimum cottage rent was established, there would be no obstacle to hinder private enterprise in providing the country with a sufficient number of up-to-date cottages.

By extending the provisions of this Act so as to cover the old age pensioners, who are responsible, to a certain extent, for the increasing dearth of labor accommodation, a further improvement in rural housing would be accomplished; for two couples of such pensioners ought to be able to share a cottage to be had at 3s. a week.

This rent, if economic, does not, of course, include the cost of the land. To be fully effective, the Minimum Cottage Rent Act must therefore be followed by a Cottage Land Act, which should provide that everyone selling 100 acres of land or over must set aside a quarter of an acre for each 100 acres sold, to be handed over to the Rural District Council for the erection of one laborer's cottage. The council could then either let this land at a purely nominal fee to a builder, or construct a cottage themselves, without taking a

penny of the ratepayers' money. As more than a million acres of land, in lots of 100 acres or over, change hands annually, at least 10,000 plots of a quarter of an acre each would become available every year.

The principle of taking away a quarter of an acre from each 100 acres might seem at first to savor of confiscation; but if this measure were coupled with a drastic reform in the costly legal proceedings necessary for the transfer of land, it would not be the landowners who would complain. Moreover, they would not fail to reap enormous benefits, directly and indirectly, from the diminution in the Poor Rate which must inevitably follow.—Yours, &c.,

A. SCHVAN.

80, Eaton Terrace.

March 5th, 1913.

Poetry.

A BALLAD OF EASTER EVE.

THERE was a crooked pawnbroker

The people did bereave,
Of all their gold and goodly gear,
Whereat they sore did grieve;
They had no heart to ring the bells,
Tho' it was Easter Eve.

The pawnbroker ate oysters,
The Rhine wine he did quaff,
And as he feasted royally
He most of all did laugh
That the good bishop that same day
Had pawned his ring and staff.

He looked around upon the store
Of all their precious things,
Their silver buckles and brocade,
Their pearls and coral strings,
Their watches and Apostle spoons,
Their rosaries and rings.

Our Savior came to the pawnbroker,
And the True Cross bore He;
He said: "Amid My people's goods
I will My Cross to be;
To keep among thy treasures rare
I give it unto thee."

The pawnbroker at these same words
Both joyed and marvelled much,
For the True Cross was worshipped
In castle and in hutch;
It was the sceptre of the King,
It was the cripple's crutch.

He thought how all the flocking folk
With awe and wonder dumb
And all their money bags unbound
To see the Cross would come,
For the sweet sign that on their brows
The priest made with his thumb.

But when he raised the Cross aloft,
A trophy of his wars,
It drew to it all gold and gems
He kept behind his bars,
Till it shone forth a jewelled Tree,
More splendid than the stars.

Then, swifter than a ship with sails,
Or than a bird with wings,
The Cross moved out of that ill place,
All hung with precious things,
With goblets gold and silver gilt,
With rosaries and rings.

To the good folk were all restored
Their heirlooms reft away,
And that the crooked pawnbroker
Was cheated of his prey,
O Altitude! they did sing
At Mass on Easter Day.

R. L. GALES.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "The Magic Way: A Psychological Study in Christian Origins." By Evelyn Underhill. (Dent. 12s. 6d. net.)
- "The French and the English." By Laurence Jerrold. (Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d. net.)
- "Confessions of a Convert." By Robert Hugh Benson. (Longmans. 3s. 6d. net.)
- "Towards a New Theatre." By Edward Gordon Craig. (Dent. 21s. net.)
- "Nogi: A Great Man against a Background of War." By Stanley Washburn. (Melrose. 3s. 6d. net.)
- "The Fitness of the Environment: An Inquiry into the Biological Significance of the Properties of Matter." By Lawrence J. Henderson. (Macmillan. 6s. 6d. net.)
- "The Road to Freedom, and What Lies Beyond." By Josiah and Ethel Wedgwood. (Daniel. 1s. net.)
- "Way Stations." By Elizabeth Robins. (Hodder & Stoughton. 6s. net.)
- "Malayan Monochromes." By Sir Hugh Clifford. (Murray. 6s.)
- "Journal d'une Femme de Cinquante Ans (1778-1815)." Par la Marquise de la Tour du Pin. (Paris: Chapelot. 6fr.)
- "Le Neveu de l'Empereur." Par Edmond Lepelletier. (Paris: Tallandier. 3fr. 50.)
- "Bismarck et L'Eglise." Tomes III. et IV. (1878-1887). Par Georges Guyau. (Paris: Perrin. 7fr.)
- "Les Aveux d'un Terroriste." Roman. Par Ernest Daudet. (Paris: Grasset. 3fr. 50.)
- "Das Eisen im Feuer." Roman. Von Clara Viebig. (Berlin: Fleischel. M. 5.)

MANY readers are looking forward to the volume of autobiography by Mr. Henry James, announced last week by Messrs. Macmillan. Its title is to be "A Small Boy and Others," and it will give an account of the early years of its author and of his brother, the late Professor William James. The book is to be published immediately after Easter.

UNDER the title of "From the Crusades to the French Revolution," Messrs. Constable are about to publish a book in which Miss Winifred Stephens gives an account of the La Trémouille family and the part which it has played in history. The volume is based on the voluminous family records that have been preserved by the La Trémouilles, and it will incorporate some personal narratives of the Revolution and earlier periods in French history. Oddly enough, the present head of this aristocratic family sits as a Socialist member in the Chamber of Deputies.

THE same publishers will shortly issue the eighth series of Mr. Paul Elmore More's "Shelburne Essays." In this volume Mr. More is concerned with "The Drift of Romanticism," a tendency which he regards as the most pronounced feature in nineteenth-century literature. Among the writers studied in the volume are William Beckford, Newman, Pater, "Fiona McLeod," Nietzsche, and Huxley.

"THE Romance of an Elderly Poet," by Mr. A. M. Broadley and Mr. Walter Jerrold, will be published during the season by Messrs. Stanley Paul. The elderly poet dealt with in the volume is Crabbe, and his romance is told in a number of letters to a young lady with whom he fell in love in his declining years.

ALTHOUGH Macaulay thought that none but an unhealthy and disorganised mind could have produced such literary luxuries as the works of Horace Walpole, the general reader is always ready to welcome a book about that entertaining gossip and rattle. Mr. Austin Dobson has written a biography of this "most eccentric, most artificial, most fastidious, most capricious of men," whose only fault is its brevity, and now a more extended study is promised us by Miss Alice Greenwood. This volume, which Messrs. Bell have in the press, is to be entitled "Horace Walpole and His World: A Study of Whig Society under George III." We may remark that the first part of this title has already been employed by Mr. L. B. Seeley, whose "Horace Walpole and His World: Select Passages from His Letters" was published in 1884. The two books are planned on very different lines, so that it is a pity their titles should bear so close a resemblance.

THE flood of books on the Revolutionary and Napoleonic period is unending, and, with the discovery of fresh material, fresh biographies of all the leading characters make their appearance. Mr. Heinemann is now preparing a translation of M. Ernest Daudet's very interesting biography of Madame Royale which was published a few months ago in Paris. As she was the only member of the Royal family imprisoned in the Temple who survived until the Restoration, Madame Royale's career offers many attractions to the biographer. In 1815 she showed so much spirit in defending the royal cause at Bordeaux that Napoleon called her "the only man in her family." There is a curious letter written by Marie Antoinette in 1794, in which she sums up Madame Royale's character. "My daughter's character," she writes, "is rather difficult, and her pride is excessive. She feels a little too much that she has the blood of Maria Theresa and Louis the Great in her veins. She must remember that, to be worthy of her blood, gentleness is as necessary a quality as dignity, and that a proud nature repels affection."

HYDE DE NEUVILLE, a translation of whose "Memoirs" by Miss Frances Jackson is to be published by Messrs. Sands, was another royalist whose biography is well worth writing. A descendant of Lord Chancellor Hyde, he devoted, as Lamartine admits, his youth, his fortune, and his life to the Bourbon cause. Both at the time of the Terror and during the Empire, he was one of the chief agents in most of the royalist plots, continually changing his name and his residence, and communicating with this country and the United States. After the Restoration he was sent as a secret agent by Louis XVIII. to London and to Florence, and he engaged in several other diplomatic missions. "If ever a life was a romance," he writes at the beginning of his "Memoirs," "it is mine. I have seen good and bad fortune at close quarters, I have walked long in the midst of danger, and ever since my youth I have been engaged in matters of the greatest moment." His niece, who edited his "Memoirs," claims with some justice that Hyde de Neuville's adventurous life and his inflexible devotion to his convictions give him a leading place among the men of his generation.

FAMOUS trials appear to be favorite reading, and though the Tichborne case has now passed out of memory, a book called "The Tichborne Tragedy," to be published by Mr. Francis Griffiths, is likely to find plenty of readers. Its author, Mr. Maurice Kenealy, is a son of Dr. Kenealy, whose conduct as Orton's advocate in the case made so great a sensation. In the coming volume, Mr. Kenealy promises to give us "the secret and authentic history of the extraordinary facts and circumstances connected with the claims, personality, identification, conviction, and last days of the Tichborne claimant."

Two promising art books are announced by Mr. Herbert Jenkins, a publisher who has already made some notable additions to the world of books. One of these is a critical monograph on the work of Leonardo da Vinci by Dr. Jens Thiis. Its aim is to apply rigorous criticism to the mass of pictures that have been ascribed to Leonardo, and to estimate his true worth by what is undoubtedly genuine. One result of the investigation made by Dr. Thiis is that of forty-two drawings in the Uffizi Gallery bearing Leonardo's name, all but seven are pronounced to be spurious. Dr. Thiis is an authority on Leonardo as well as on his master, Verrocchio, and his book promises to be the definitive monograph on this artist.

THE other volume will be a study of the work and personality of Francisco Goya by Mr. Hugh Stokes. Mr. Stokes claims that Goya's life was as full of incident as that of Benvenuto Cellini. Though a Court painter, he was a fervent Republican, and he died in exile at Bordeaux. Apart from the realistic pictures by which he is best known, his collection of "capriccios" or political caricatures is full of spirit and originality, while his satirical work has caused him to be described as the Spanish Hogarth. Mr. Stokes lays special stress on the manner in which Goya's canvases reflect the horrors of the Peninsular War.

Reviews.

FRENCH SOWERS OF IDEAS.

"French Prophets of Yesterday." By ALBERT L. GUÉRARD.
(Unwin. 12s. 6d. net.)

THE curious ignorance of foreign affairs displayed by eminent Englishmen, and the extent to which English judgments of men and things are influenced by subjective and sectarian considerations, remind us often enough that we have advanced but little beyond the standpoint of the divine immortalised by Renan who, in 1829, published two large volumes, "fort goûtés des révérends, pour établir que Mahomet n'était autre chose que la petite corne du bouc qui figure au chapitre viii. de Daniel, et que le pape était la grande corne." Speaking the other day in the House of Lords on the Welsh Church Bill, a bishop, from whom better things might have been expected, referred to "the present great spiritual revival in the French Church"; adding that what attracted his attention was "the magnificent loyalty with which, in asserting its principles and spiritual claims, it displayed an extraordinary indifference to its secular position and financial resources. It put spiritual principles first, and secular privileges and finance last." The Bishop, it seems, derived his information from sources whose accuracy leaves much to be desired. The attitude which excites his admiration, far from being spontaneous, was forced by Rome on the French bishops; and the principles, such as they are, which it expresses are not theirs. Their first plenary assembly accepted the conditions imposed by the Law of Separation; Rome over-rode the vote. The late Archbishop of Bordeaux, Cardinal Lecot, did his best to establish a "pseudo-culturelle"; the Archbishop of Rouen wished to form the "mutualités ecclésiastiques"; the priest-deputy, the Abbé Lemire, at the instance of many bishops, endeavored to secure the pension-fund for aged and infirm clergy; in each case it was Rome that defeated the attempt. It is to Pius X. and his advisers, not to the French Church, that the Bishop's homage is due. While, as regards the "great spiritual revival"—we should not ourselves apply either epithet to the movement in question—the reader may be referred to that important study of contemporary Church history, "Ce qu'on a fait de l'Eglise" [Félix Alcan, 1912.], which, with M. de Narfon's "Séparation des Eglises et de l'Etat," is an admirable guide to the existing situation in France. In the work before us, Professor Guérard goes higher up-stream. The question which he asks is: "Is France irrevocably lost to Christianity?" And he considers it as it presented itself during the generation covered by the career of Napoleon III. as President and Emperor: 1848-70. It was then that the waters, now running so turbidly, took their direction and color; the prophets of yesterday were the spiritual ancestors of those of to-day.

Two facts of French life offer an almost insuperable difficulty to the English observer: the association between Catholicism and Christianity—practically the two are identical; and the dissociation between morals and religion. Almost to a man, the Decadents—Verlaine, Huysmans, and the rest—have been supporters of the Church; its opponents are austere Puritans of the type of Quinet, Michelet, and Taine. If by Christianity is meant supernaturalism, anticlericalism is anti-Christian—hence, perhaps, the English bishop's avowed sympathy with Ultramontanism. On the other hand,

"Not only the leaders of free-thought in France, but the rank and file of their army, compare favorably with most Churches in the world. The country, as a whole, though officially estranged from Christianity, is law-abiding, intelligent, and prosperous. The people are men and women like ourselves, not angels; they show a fine sense of social brotherhood, a disinterested love for justice and truth; their standard of morality—public, commercial, and private—is not lower than our own. In other words, they have undoubtedly preserved the essentials of Christian civilisation, while rejecting every article in the Apostles' Creed."

Catholicism is not only a religion and a form of thought, but a polity. And the polity is a more prominent feature in the system than either the form of thought or the religion. That this has been a source of strength in the past is certain; it is certain, also, that it is a source of weakness in our own

time. The Church has developed a genius for compromising alliances—Austria, Naples, the Third Empire, Legitimism, Boulangerism: "Catholicism, clericalism, reaction are synonymous in the popular mind." The failure of the various attempts made from within to resist these tendencies must not blind us to the Pyrrhic character of the victories of Ultramontanism. Against the sectarian gain must be set the loss on the larger field of the nation and of European society. The Church sheds its stronger and more progressive elements:—

"Hence an undeniable lowering in the character of French Catholicism, a recrudescence of materialistic superstitions, the uncritical acceptance of doubtful miracles, a tone of bitter arrogance in controversy, charity sneered at, and faith reduced to blind obedience."

Such spiritual and moral forces as the system still supplies are derived from men of the type of the holy Curé d'Ars, who, Catholic by the accident of birth and circumstance, are, and would be under any form of religion, saints at heart. Such persons, however, are exceptional, and tend to become more so; if religion is to live and act on a large scale, it requires a wider basis than they can supply.

Under the head of Catholicism, M. Guérard considers the "Satanic School," represented by Baudelaire and Barbey d'Aurevilly; the Gospel of Authority, by Louis Veuillot; the Liberal movement of Montalembert and Dupanloup; and the tendencies associated with such names as Gratry and Hello. His conclusion is that the official policy of Rome has been consistent throughout. "Rome would admit no alternative between theocracy and free-thought. France did not choose theocracy." This significant fact qualifies the merit of consistency. A general is consistent who sacrifices his troops in the attempt to retain an untenable position. But such consistency does not either deserve or receive praise. Nor, in spite of the practical difficulty of defining or limiting a theocracy, is there any reason why the mass of current popular opinion and practice should be covered by that term. In urging the need of discrimination, the Liberal Catholics were at once reasonable and within their right.

Among the most interesting personal sketches are those of Sainte-Beuve and Renan. The distinctive quality of the former was his "insatiable curiosity."

"He had studied, tried, and abandoned everything. He had been in every case a most promising catechumen, willing, earnest, and supremely intelligent. Ever on the eve of taking the decisive step, he would ever disappoint the expectation of his friends, and pass on to a new experience. Of all men, he was the most unstable, the most elusive and slippery; his mind was a kaleidoscope or a series of dissolving views, and himself, according to his admirers, a Proteus—a chameleon according to his detractors. Sincere withdrawal, in his own undefinable way; disinterested in his evolutions; apparently striving for the highest; a confessed and confirmed deserter, and yet, in this respect at least, not despicable."

His "Port Royal" took twenty-five years of his life (1834-59), and remains "one of the great religious books of the nineteenth century." But his attitude became more and more detached from concrete issues. "I have played and dreamed much in my life," he said. "Now, that I am nearing the term, I think."

Renan was of another type. The anti-Christ of popular orthodoxy,

"he remained a priest all his life. One could not meet him without being struck by his sacerdotal appearance. His soul remained a 'secularised cathedral'; you may turn it into a stable or a barn, there still lingers an all-pervading fragrance of incense. . . . He remained in French literature as the most complete type of the aristocrat. His courtesy was that of a prince; 'transcendent disdain' lurked behind his unassuming and kindly exterior."

His influence on the development of Modernism was great. More than any one man, he breathed life into the dry bones of theology, and popularised the study of religion by showing its intimate connection with the mind and life of mankind.

With Renan this suggestive and comprehensive survey ends. The situation of his generation contained that of our own.

"At the fall of the Empire, supernatural religion, in spite of the material power of the Church, was steadily losing ground; while no form of natural religion could aspire to spiritual hegemony. After forty years the conditions are substantially the same. The old is weaker; the new not stronger: no authority has risen from the ruins."

The note on which the writer closes is the parallelism of naturalism and supernaturalism—the one standing for the prose of life, the other for its poetry; and both being “needed for the universal choir.” Neither, it seems truer to say, can be accepted as it stands. The one must be purified from the taint of brutality; the other from that of falsehood: criticism is the *unum necessarium* of the time. Its absence distinguishes the clerical from the lay mind; the cleavage between the two, emphasised in Catholicism, is the characteristic danger both of our religion and our civilisation. Hitherto in England we have been free, at least comparatively, from it. To-day, unfortunately, we have to be on our guard against its being brought in unawares.

A POET OF THE TIME.

“Poems of Love and Earth.” By JOHN DRINKWATER
(Nutt. 1s. 6d. net.)

“THE time’s my tutor, and my song the wage.” So says Mr. Drinkwater, in a charming and significant dedication to his latest volume of poems. The line sums up, very conveniently, the special quality which distinguishes this poet’s work from the main mass of contemporary versifying. He has seriously and passionately given his mind to the task of understanding what it is that the spirit of the time is endeavoring to teach humanity; and he has proved the success of his understanding, and, what is more, the grave exultation of his success, in some passages of fine poetry. “The time” is not at all an easy-going tutor; not everyone can follow his lessons. And of those that can make something of his teaching, not everyone can pay for it. The bill he presents seems simple enough; he merely asks for his own doctrine back again, but modified and controlled by the individual nature which received it as proof that it has been received indeed—profoundly and sincerely received. And if the account is to be completely settled, the teaching must be paid back, not only mixed with an individual apprehension, but entirely *formed*—and, in fact, re-created—into an individual expression; it must be made shapely and coherent, submitted to the inmost law of the pupil’s spirit—to his plastic imagination. The most of us accept the teaching of the time in such manner as we can, and are grateful, but leave the bill unpaid. Mr. Drinkwater is one of the few who pay.

What, in fact, is most pleasantly noticeable in his poetry is the thorough mastery therein of his plastic imagination, the real submission of his material to the requirements of poetry. His art does not possess a very broad scope, and it has not much of intense and rare passion; correspondingly, his diction and imagery, though pure and finely adequate, and sometimes attaining a certain large dignity, are not particularly stirring. But Mr. Drinkwater’s poetry can do without the obvious excitements, because it has the great double virtue of expressing a real apprehension of contemporary spirit, and of expressing it in a strictly poetical manner. He will not say anything unless he can say it well; and when there is so much to be said, such restraint is admirable. The significance of the present time is a thing decidedly troublesome to genuinely poetic expression. It involves the conscious re-adjustment of familiar intellectual relationships, both with human and with material circumstances. The external world of which man is conscious to-day forces on his mind experiences which are quite new in human history, though they have been more or less vaguely suggested in other periods. Science has not created man’s world of to-day; but science has certainly forced him to become irresistibly conscious of it; and it is a world which, in its first invasion of consciousness, may seem so formidable as to be appalling; but, nevertheless, to the courage which will face the majestic process of its destiny, promises splendid exultation. And the most considerable things in modern literature represent so many attempts made by the human consciousness to become familiar with its new way of experiencing fate. But, along with this main re-adjustment go several others, scarcely less important; re-adjustment in the relationship between man and his fellow-man, man and society, man and woman. If poetry means to take all, or, indeed, any of this ferment and perturbation for its subject, it evidently sets itself to

a very difficult task; and it is not surprising that we find poetry to-day inclined either to keep itself pure by ignoring the spirit of the time, or to express the spirit of the time at the cost of artistic purity. There are poets writing to-day who have more dazzling art at their command than Mr. Drinkwater; others, too, are more conspicuously, though not more sincerely, modern in their content. But there are very few poets who combine, as he does, a strong artistic mastery with frank acceptance of the time’s difficult teaching. He is never disposed to let the ferment of modern thought have its own way in his poetry; he will not let it violate poetic form—a violence which too many poets nowadays think must be the necessary accompaniment of the modern spirit. We read his poetry, first of all, because it is poetry; its value for us does not necessarily depend on, but is nevertheless very greatly enhanced by, our perception that it is significantly modern poetry.

All this does not apply to the whole of his poetry. In his latest book, “Poems of Love and Earth,” there are a good many pieces which are merely pleasant to read. And there are other poems which do not explicitly belong to the kind of work just described, but are, nevertheless, closely connected with it. “The Crowning of Dreaming John” and “The Feckenham Men” are things of sheer fantasy. Dreaming John walked to Westminster to see the King crowned; but, though he had a shining silver shilling, they wouldn’t let him in; so he walks back again, falls asleep on the road, and is himself crowned by the fairies. And “the jolly men of Feckenham” thought it would be a fine thing to make, for once in a way, a rick of flowers instead of corn; and was not this, the poet asks, “a fiery-hearted thing to do?” Such fantasies, at any rate, are very agreeable things to read; but with Mr. Drinkwater, the expression of fantasy involves also the expression of an attitude to life. Westminster is not the only place where a man may be crowned; and fragrance may be as valuable as bread. But a more characteristic, and more specifically modern, mental attitude appears in a lyric of two stanzas called “The Traveller”; a lyric which is, in workmanship and in idea, a sort of summation of Mr. Drinkwater’s poetry, and which is, moreover, a thing of delightful beauty. Here is the first verse:—

“When March was master of furrow and fold,
And the skies kept cloudy festival,
And the daffodil pods were tipped with gold,
And a passion was in the plover’s call,
A spare old man went hobbling by,
With a broken pipe, and a tapping stick,
And he mumbled—‘Blossom before I die,
Be quick, you little brown buds, be quick.’”

Who would not wish to be that “spare old man”? Undoubtedly, Mr. Drinkwater’s book is worth reading, if only for the sake of coming upon this admirable lyric. But there is much else in the book which will reward anyone who is looking for poetry sincerely and sanely, not defiantly and extravagantly, modern—for “the breath and finer spirit of knowledge,” of man’s present knowledge of himself. It is the duty and privilege of the poet to turn the discords of experience into harmony; and if we look for this in Mr. Drinkwater’s poetry, we shall certainly not be disappointed. That unhappy discord, for instance, of which modern feminism is the sign, and which might so easily make poetry hopelessly untunable, Mr. Drinkwater’s art knows how to manage—how to reduce to harmony. In two lyrics, “Wed” (curiously similar, in external technique, to some of Mr. Hardy’s poetry) and “Uncrowned,” subtle psychology and strict art are joined to express something typically modern—man’s consciousness, keen and sympathetic, of the consciousness of woman; and to express it, not in any hoarse mood of rebellion, but in a spirit of belief in eventual perfect re-adjustment. So, too, we may find in this poetry a wise and determined harmony prevailing over the sense of discordant circumstance; through exquisite delight in the seasonal beauty of the earth, over material circumstance, and over human circumstance (for many the more discordant of the two) through a genuine feeling of common brotherhood in one destiny. And the conclusion of all this is, in Mr. Drinkwater’s own courageous words:—

“A quickened sense
That man albeit troubled of his scars,
May bear him like a god for recompense,
And set his forehead to the flaming stars.”

It comes, indeed, to that fine expression of life brought into quiet harmony with death, in the lyric of the "spare old man" who needed but to see the "little brown buds" come to blossom once more, in order to die smiling and content.

All this may be read in scattered but not uncertain passages, through several pieces of Mr. Drinkwater's "Poems of Love and Earth." But there is one poem in the book in which a process and a result, similar to what has just been roughly described, is explicitly set forth—the poem called "The Fires of God." This is a sort of free ode, a little protracted perhaps, and not always quite easy to understand, but written throughout with excellent dignity, and here and there with vigorous energy. Those who have found in Mr. Drinkwater's preceding work the promise of some real achievement in poetry, will, it may pretty confidently be said, find their expectation completely justified in this fine poem. Plastic imagination in it has striven with stubborn matters, and wrought them into a shapely music, both of thought and of sound; the alternation of recitative and pure melody in the poem's rhythm is extremely effective. Its opening describes a struggle, first with pride, and then with despair. The world, alike of man and of his material fate, seems nothing but discord:—

"The deep disturbed fret
Of men who made brief tarrying in hell,
On their earth travelling.
It was as though the lives of men should be
Set circle-wise, whereof one little span,
Through which all passed, was blackened with the wing
Of perilous evil, bateless misery."

And, again:—

"Through trackless ways the soul of man is hurled,
No sign upon the forehead of the skies,
No beacon, and no chart
Are given to him, and the inscrutable world
But mocks his scars, and fills his mouth with dust."

But this gloomy mood yields to the beauty of the earth—"the prosperous leaves that loved the sun and rain," "the prudent, diligent spring"—and to a profound sense of human fellowship. Discord insensibly passes into harmony; and this comes to a delighted sense of the inestimable boon of being, and a grave passion to make the utmost of the boon:—

"Wise of the brief beloved span
Of this our glad earth-travelling,
Of beauty's bloom and ordered plan,
Of love and love's compassioning,
Of all the dear delights that spring
From man's communion with man;
We cherish every hour that strays
Adown the cataract of the days."

The poem has the greatest of artistic virtues—it has form. Both the thought and the shape of it go forward in an ordered and connected process. And the prime requirement of poetical art is satisfied in it; it uses words with vividness, freshness, and insight. It is a poem, too, whose significance will scarcely be missed by anyone who has learnt something of the time's teaching.

A DIARIST OF IRELAND.

"The Journal of John Stevens, Containing a Brief Account of the War in Ireland, 1689-1691." Edited by the Rev. ROBERT H. MURRAY, Litt.D. (Clarendon Press. 10s.6d. net.)

THIS interesting "Journal" has been edited with care by Dr. Murray. His standard of work is high, and the range of his reading is illustrated by the sentence on p. xlvii, in which he carries the discussion of good and bad currency from Aristophanes to James II., through France, Poland, and England. He has made an exhaustive study of manuscript materials, as well as of printed books; though there may be some difference of opinion as to his special selection of works to which the mark of superior value is adjudged. The notes give a multitude of biographical details, and minute military information as to the numbers, disposition, and equipment of various regiments under James II. All that can be known of Stevens and the series of his literary ventures has been collected; and Dr. Murray's account of the authorities for the Jacobite War is of real value. On the other hand, it must be said that when we come to questions of

Irish life and social conditions, Dr. Murray's work is on a lower plane. He suffers as an editor from his evident indifference to the history of any Ireland earlier than the wars of William, when the island became first dignified in his eyes as a stage for European statesmen, where Popes and Emperors and Kings fought out their quarrels, and Irishmen became food for Continental powder.

The "Journal" gives Stevens's own record of his brief and harsh experience as a soldier, where he wins our hearts by his absolute sincerity, courage, charity, and fidelity. His journey from Wales, across England and France, to reach Ireland, pictures for us hardships common to all men in those days. His account of the Irish campaign, from the Boyne to the Siege of Limerick, gives us a measure of Irish sufferings. No misery of body or mind was wanting to the army of James, starved and naked, where the greater number of the soldiers were without guns, ammunition, or swords, and had, indeed, never fired a musket, nor could be taught for lack of ammunition; where men of Irish speech could understand neither the words of command nor the instructions of foreign officers (it would never be supposed, from Dr. Murray's account, that Irishmen spoke Irish); while their own traditional leaders had, for the last hundred years, been deliberately degraded, deprived of authority and responsibility, and left without knowledge or discipline—an army miserable in itself, and followed by a yet more wretched crowd of famished women and children driven from provinces in the enemy's hands, "and those poor wretches had no other home but the army, and must perish without it." By turns hunted by panic or impelled by heroism, the troops suffered every calamity. "It is strange to note that friends and foes alike expressed a certain contempt for the Irish soldiers," is the characteristic comment of Dr. Murray. Stevens had seen their pitiful flight from the Boyne, the fury of their courage at Athlone, and their endurance in Limerick. He had noted them "without any other covering than the canopy of heaven," refusing to cut for fires a few trees on the site where an ancient saint had lived. It seemed to him marvellous then, and a case to after ages surely incredible, that an army should be kept for a year without pay, without so much as straw to lie on, or anything to cover them the whole winter, with clothes that would scarce hide their nakedness by day, with food so scant that they rather starved than lived on it; and that there was neither mutiny among them, nor more disorders than are common to the best-paid armies. "I have been astonished to think how they lived, and much more that they should voluntarily choose to live so, when if they would have forsaken the service they might have been received by the enemy into good pay, and want for nothing." "These extremities, endured as they were with courage and resolution, are sufficient with any reasonable persons to clear the reputation of the Irish from the malicious imputations of their enemies."

To support his contempt for the Irish, Dr. Murray produces once more the usual well-known passages on the low culture and brutishness of the people, as evidence of the universal testimony to an "unfavorable view of Irish civilisation." Ordinary rules of criticism would require some discussion of the source, the time, and the occasion of these comments; and the sympathy and observation of Stevens pointed out a way of comprehension:—

"Few strangers love them better or pity them more than I do. And, therefore, to do them justice, I cannot but say it is not to be admired they should be poor, having been so long under the heavy yoke of the Oliverian English party, whose study it was always to oppress and, if possible, to extirpate them. Poverty is a source from whence all other worldly miseries proceed; it makes them ignorant, not having wherewithal to apply themselves to studies, it enervates the spirits and makes them dull and slothful, and so from race to race they grow more and more degenerate, wanting the improvements of a free and ingenuous education, and being still brought up in a sort of slavery and bondage."

But Dr. Murray, after the example of his predecessors, gives his quotations without any mitigation or warning as to possible motives or causes. (Chichester is quoted as to the vices of the creaghts!) He does not define localities, nor observe dates, nor indicate that every reference is to a country scourged by the fury of war, where civilisation had been trodden under foot in a century and a-half of English "conquest." He quotes, for example, well-

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known passages on the scanty food of the Irish in the terrible times of 1600 and 1644. No doubt people learned to live on "white meats," when tillage had become impossible, and when the closing of the harbors against the Spanish trade absolutely cut off the entire supply of salt for preserving fish or meat. God only knows how men live in the last extremity of destitution. In his discussion of the Irish creaghts he shows complete indifference to the question of the tenure and use of land in Ireland, and of social organisation; and is apparently content to take his information (including the authority of Chichester) from a paper written sixty years ago by Prendergast, without any reference to Irish sources. He asks no questions. No chaos is supposed to be improbable among wild Irish. In the absence of historic inquiry we find a series of mere repetitions, out of place in a work where we might hope to see an important subject treated with fresh knowledge, or frankly set aside for further study. One of Dr. Murray's most surprising suggestions is that the misery pictured by Stevens is the natural state of Irish civilisation, since it existed in far-western districts which were "beyond the control of England." The sentence is in itself sufficient proof of the editor's indifference to Irish history before 1688, and the relations of England to the western harbors and their *hinterland* up to that time. Throughout the volume, indeed, Dr. Murray betrays no interest whatever in topography, nor any curiosity as to the relics of Irish industries, ruined towns, abbeys, country-houses, and deserted ironworks, that Stevens records. Their origin and fate do not concern him in any way, if we except a brief observation that St. Mary's at Limerick and St. Canice's at Kilkenny are the only medieval cathedrals in Ireland outside Dublin still standing and in use. (What a record of the progress of liberty and religion in Ireland under English rule!)

Dr. Murray is an authority on the Continental and English sides of his subject, where he recognises themes important and extensive enough for his pen. Ireland, to judge from his books, appears to him small and distasteful; its physical features and historical relics blurred and indistinct, and its people ignoble and uninteresting, both as to their previous history and their actual fate. Their modes of thought and controversies as to the kingship in the seventeenth century are passed over as of no consequence, or vaguely suggested in a strange phrase—"the independence of his entire island, with, perhaps, James reigning over him"! We are left to choose whether the Irishman's motives were mainly economic, or patriotic, or treacherous, or religious, or drifting at chance. Ireland's moment of dignity only dawned when it became a battle-field for Europe—when William fought on its soil for his fatherland and the Emperor, and James for France, and "the Boyne proved to the despotic power of Louis what Salamis was to Xerxes and Leipsic to Napoleon." (Or might we give the honor to La Hogue?) Dr. Murray rejoices with "the Holy Roman Emperor and the Pope" over the overthrow of Gallicanism and the liberties of a National Church in France. "Gallicanism had at last received a severe blow. While State religion had thus been checked, liberty had been allowed to develop more freely than before, and both these priceless blessings are the results of that memorable July day." It is interesting to see a Protestant clergyman of a Church which calls itself "the National Church of Ireland" welcoming the destruction of Gallican liberties by Ultramontane forces. But if the overthrow of Gallican privileges was so conspicuous a boon, what were the "priceless blessings" of the Boyne to Ireland? What about the enthronement there of a "State Church," alien, greedy, worldly, unbridled in power and cruelty; the new development of "liberty" as shown in the penal laws; the ruin of a civilisation, and demoralisation of a people? Dr. Murray indeed excuses the penal laws by the argument that the persecutions of Louis XIV. were worse, and justifies them in some measure by a suggestion that the suffering they inflicted may have purified the morals of women in garrison towns and a broken land. We may ask: Are these the means by which the general freedom of nations is in truth advanced? Does the humiliation of France excuse the destruction of Ireland, and the end justify the means? Is there no brotherhood in the European Commonwealth? We know, indeed, the list of tyrannies in Europe which have been each in turn justified

by the classic example of England in Ireland. An Irishman and a historian might, perhaps, spare some word besides that of triumph in viewing such a scene of desolation consecrated by the name of liberty. The kindly Stevens, in his day, had been nearer to the people in their trial.

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"Adam Lindsay Gordon and his Friends in England and Australia." By EDITH HUMPHRIS and DOUGLAS SLADEN. (Constable. 12s. 6d. net.)

ALTHOUGH the lamentable suicide of Adam Lindsay Gordon is not more remote in history than the year 1870, the brilliant, bold, picturesque, and most versatile man seems already to have been adopted by Australia as her national hero. Even now legends begin to cluster round his memory. A generation of Australians not yet evolved may be told that he (and not Captain Phillip, with his cargo of outlaws) was the real founder of the colony.

Gordon was born, to be sure, 10,000 miles from Australia; but that does not matter. Australia was but the country of his adoption, yet we all regard him as pure Australian, and so do the Australians. No other colonist from the Mother Country has ever, perhaps, identified himself so variously and so completely with the distant country of his choice. He was a poet, and is "the Byron of Australia." He was a great and daring horseman, and stands for Australia's typical man over country. He was of the Bush in the roaring days of old, and is Australia's typical Bushman.

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"Romance was Gordon's birthright. He was sprung from the *false* Gordon, who perhaps gave this lordly race their ballad epithet—the Adam of Gordon in Berwickshire, who founded the fortunes of his house; the trusted henchman of King Edward the First, whose timely desertion to the Bruce was rewarded with the broad lands in Aberdeenshire which have remained the patrimony of the Gordons."

Few who have read with interest the sporting career of Gordon in Australia (to what extent known here we cannot say, but in the colony it is household knowledge) are aware that his sporting friends in England were among the most famous boxing and racing celebrities of their day. As a gay young idler at Cheltenham, he would put on the gloves with Tom Sayers—and was no chopping-block for that champion. Owners of Grand National 'chasers gave him mounts, for his pluck, perhaps, more than for his skill, since at this date he seems to have been renowned less for fences negotiated than for croppers occasioned by them. One of the earliest of his doggerels takes note of the circumstance:—

"There's lots of refusing, and falls, and mishaps.
Who's down on the Chestnut? He's hurt himself, p'raps.
'Oh, it's Lindsey the Lanky,' says Hard-riding Bob,
'He's luckily saved Mr. Calcraft a job.'"

He went to Australia not much more than a youth, and it was the nick of time, for at Cheltenham he was in no little danger of lapsing into a waster of the turf and fighting-booth. Australia braced and sobered him; and it is among the sincere pities that at the age of thirty-seven (an age more than once fatal to genius) some passing financial strain and a fit of melancholy drove him to blow his brains out with a rifle. Of the quite exceptional romance of his career, nothing whatever, we fancy, can be missing from these pages. What a shock of agreeable surprise for that learned priest, Father Tenison Woods, to discover in the long, lean, young horsebreaker, on a half-broken colt (his companion by accident on a fifty-mile ride through the Bush), a student of Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Racine, and Corneille,

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who half-recited, half-chanted to him page-long passages from one after another of these hierarchs! This, however, was but one Gordon. There was another—the racing man, who, on the eve of a local meeting somewhere, wrote to a friend that he was sick of it, and not fit to ride a donkey—and went and rode three winners off the reel. There was yet another Gordon (all these as distinguished from the fitful yet incessant writer), who did not brag, but hated to be beaten, and would take his life in his hands to keep his place of pride among his friends. This was the Gordon of the Mount Gambier leap. Returning one day from a kangaroo hunt, Lindsay Gordon watched some members of the party jumping their horses over cattle. His own horse, not trained to the game, refused it. There was a precipice at hand, guarded by a fence; and over fence and precipice Gordon proposed to leap his horse. He did it. He must almost have turned his horse in the air, and the least mistake on the part of horse or rider would have plunged them both into a lake two hundred feet below. Scott would have made an epic of it in a quantity of cantos, and Australia has since raised an obelisk on the spot. "He carried Red Lancer over the fence, and, by leaping from rock to rock, cleared a chasm more than forty feet wide, the noble horse seeming to be inspired with the fearless courage of its rider."

The man who did this, and wrote "How we beat the Favorite," and sped himself untimely, while his muscles were still taut, is not likely to be forgotten in Australia.

HEARTS WITH A DIFFERENCE.

"The Mating of Lydia." By Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD.
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"The Combined Maze." By MAY SINCLAIR. (Hutchinson. 6s.)

THE two novels before us might belong to separate epochs in literature, so different are their offerings to the reader; and this difference originates in something at once deeper and less deep than character. For character is of the personal equation; so that to say (as one might say) that in Mrs. Ward we have the thoughtful, sober, slowly ripening, and impressively ageing British matron, while in Miss Sinclair, Woman, wholly ungraded as matron, wife, or girl, leaps into our line of vision . . . were to put forth something which, interesting though it might be to us, would leave director issues untouched. More than character is here—the very image of the age is here in little. Already, as we read "The Mating of Lydia," we are conscious of the past; for the problem of this book, though not yet "dealt with" by the mere slow hand of Government, is among the problems solved, as such have ever been, will ever be, by the minority that is always right. The Land is here the true heroine; Lydia exists but as the pretty peg on which to hang the story, and the story tumbles very perseveringly from its peg. Nothing is "real" but the state of Melrose's property, and that is, in truth, the great, dominating unreality which causes us to feel, as we read, that we are being taken back into the past. Melrose's property is a public scandal; his tenants are dying by scores. One village, Mainstairs, is a mere lazar-house; all round him is hatred and reprobation and resentment. He, a connoisseur in bric-à-brac, hoards all his wealth—enormous, ever-growing, for he has been a speculator *hors ligne*—in the interest of this one joy, and lives a hermit-life within his wondrous mansion, watched from afar by his neighbors, and especially by his distant kinsman, Lord Tatham, that exclamatory, genial young aristocrat whom Mrs. Ward should now be able to put on paper, as it were, in her sleep. For how alike they all have been, and continue to be—these kindly lordlings, who never speak without several dashes and an exclamation mark, who seem for ever to be going out of the room or the garden with a gay or a heartbroken cry on their lips! We know them thoroughly now; we have penetrated the aristocratic pale as we had not in the days when "a Marquis looked over the balusters"; and in our ignorance we wondered, for a moment, if "a Marquis" could be some kind of queer-necked bird. But, as ever, amid all this touching medie-

valism, Mrs. Ward shows the benevolent heart of the "good" feudalist. Impulsive, warm, that heart is not; but it is kindly in its patronising fashion. Certainly, it feels, everybody should do his duty—everybody, high and "low." Even Melrose may be reclaimed so far as to try to make a will in his daughter's favor. He is murdered ere the will is written out; but all comes right; the daughter—most unengaging example of that other familiar Wardian type, the "little wilful creature"—marries the young lord, while Lydia "mates" with the ambiguous Faversham—Byronic, beautiful, and nearly base. But not quite base, since Lydia must be mated. . . . Yes; this book is of the past, and by no means of the best tradition in its author's past.

Miss Sinclair, too, can patronise, but with the very difference of the difference. Hers is the purest intellectual condescension. We bridle a little as she accosts us:—

"You may say that there was something wrong somewhere, some mistake, from the very beginning, in his parentage, in the time and place and manner of his birth. . . ."

We feel that we do not at all want to "say" it, and that if we did, we should hope to say it with less of vain repetition. Truly, this accost is unconsidered. Nothing in the sequel confirms it; John Randall Fulleylove Ransome—"Ranny"—dear, lovable fellow though he is, never causes us to question his place in life. And the initial error in "authors' manners" persists throughout the book; we are not, as too often Miss Sinclair moves us to assert, the fools she takes us for. She tells us things that keenly interest, delightfully amuse, and deeply move us; but for this reader, at any rate, the rich gift too frequently waxed poor, because the giver proved so unkind to the intelligence.

The fault is one too common in English writers when telling of any kind of "Nether World." The novelist who is recalled by that title—George Gissing, now so prominent in all our minds—taught us, too, as from a height of that drab region; but he at least assumed that we could stand beside him. Miss Sinclair will not have us by her side; she will rather use this prattle, that our feeble minds may comprehend. But let us curb our intellectual pride; and having done so, very gratefully we can enjoy "The Combined Maze"—title more unattractive, surely, than novelist ever found before, and not so apt as to redeem its lack of charm, for the "maze" is here a very small affair.

"Granville" is an invention of pure deligt. Granville is the name of Ranny's little house, with its purple pillar of sham porphyry, in Southfields, the new suburb. He turns it into a personality, and thus for a while, amuses his lazy, dirty, lovely wife, the "sullen-sweet" Violet, and makes her keep it clean and tidy. Violet is a true creation—the triumph of the book. In her sullen-sweetness, with her blue, lowered eyes, and her voice with the "thick throb" in it, she burns the pages through and through with the smoulder of her sensuality. Of Ranny, it is impossible for any reviewer to avoid saying that he is of Mr. Wells all compact. Miss Sinclair may never have read a word of Mr. Wells, but though she had never so much as heard of him, the same comment must be made. Before Ranny was, Mr. Lewisham and Mr. Hoopdriver and Kipps are. The whole conception is indeed Wellsian; but, in some respects, this book surpasses its more recent prototypes, for the odd, flustered effect which Mr. Wells's work now too often produces—as of a man beset by documents and unable to select from the tumbled mass—is far from Miss Sinclair's. She is not, as he is, concerned with remedies; she conceives herself too intensely as artist for that. Her part, as she well perceives, is to *show*: let others do the cleansing—and most vividly, most ruthlessly and steadily she does show, with all the concentrated ardor of the woman who has mingled in the hurly-burly, and burns to reveal her vision that all may see and mourn as she has seen and mourned. Here is the great severance from the elder woman-writer of which we spoke in the beginning. In Mrs. Ward's book, no theorising about the liberty which Lydia prized avails to hide the drawing-room outlook—the lady peering from behind her curtains at the lower classes and the problems of the day; in Miss Sinclair's utterances we feel that the woman has "gone down into the midst," that our author, for example, must somehow or other have contrived to spend a week or two as a guest at "Granville." Mrs. Ward looks; Miss Sinclair sees; both feel—but with pulses so little alike that the very heart of each might seem to beat in a different part of her anatomy.

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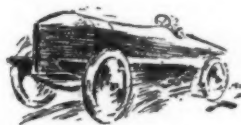
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